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## The Week

THE formal withdrawal by Mr. William G. McAdoo of his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination is merely a public recognition of an accomplished fact. For many reasons he had ceased to be available as a leader of the dry "progressives" in the Democratic party; and if that element in the party proposed to put up an effective fight against the threatened nomination of Governor Smith, it needed a new leader and a reorganization of its forces. Mr. McAdoo's withdrawal has, consequently, a two-fold significance. It is a tribute from his most embittered opponent to the increasing strength of Governor Smith's candidacy. But it is a warning that his enemies within the party are as resolute, if not as confident, as they formerly were. They will now probably concentrate on the selection of a new candidate such as former Secretary Meredith of Iowa, who, unlike Al Smith, has some chance of taking away from a Republican candidate, such as Hughes or Hoover, the discontented Republican drys of the Far West. An obviously persuasive argument can be advanced in favor of nominating a candidate who can attack the weakest part of the Republican line.

MR. MEREDITH is a man of character and intelligence who would probably make a creditable showing as President, but, notwithstanding the tactical arguments in his favor, it is wholly improbable that either he or any other dry candidate can stem the tide in favor of Al Smith's nomination. It is difficult to figure out how Smith can be elected, even if the largest claims of his friends to his popularity in the large cities are admitted, but it is quite impossible by any reasonable calculation to figure out how Mr. Meredith or Senator Walsh can be elected. The drys will not, consequently, have any answer to the argument which accounts chiefly for Al Smith's increasing strength in the party—the argument that the New Yorker is the only Democrat who can comfort himself with even a remote fighting chance of victory. Nevertheless, it is important for the Democratic drys to agree upon a candidate and to make a fight. They are not likely to prevent Smith's nomination, but they may be able at the last moment to make his nomination contingent upon the acceptance of a semi-dry prohibition plank in the national platform. As the campaign progresses, they are likely to concentrate more and more upon an effort to insert in the platform a tribute to prohibitionism which they cannot derive from the record of the candidate.

GOVERNOR Smith's steadily improving chance for the nomination may prove a boon for progressive politics in the United States, but it is an indication of weakness rather than of strength in the Democratic party. More than half of the party, if it really believed in its dry convictions, would fight Smith's nomination as desperately as the Smith faction fought McAdoo's nomination in 1924, but its leaders realize that the repetition of such a fight would probably put an end to the party as a national organization and compromise the security of their offices in the Democratic states.


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They may have to let Smith have the nomination because of the danger of irreconcilable opposition, but in that event they will try, in justice to their own convictions, to deprive Smith's nomination of its obvious meaning. They may not succeed. Al Smith is an able political tactician, and he may outgeneral them. In any event he will, as the nominee, be able gradually to write his own platform. But the fight will weaken his campaign, and force him to look elsewhere for an issue which will enable him to wage a vigorous warfare on the Republicans.

THERE is, of course, no such issue in sight—or, at all events, none which Al Smith can seize and sharpen and wield effectively. The Republicans are sufficiently vulnerable from the point of view of an intelligent critic, but intelligent criticism has nothing to do at present with the definition of popular issues. The Republicans can fail almost completely to meet any of the real problems of American national government without suffering any penalty for their failure. For the Democrats will have shared their ineptitude, and public opinion, which in the politics of today is governed by fears or is distracted by red herrings, will not listen to the story. Moreover, even if the story came to find an appreciative audience, it is doubtful whether Al Smith could invent and tell it. During the last six months, while his chances of the nomination have improved rapidly, he has done nothing to deserve his improved prospects. He remains utterly unknown as a national political leader. He has not begun to focus and build up the effective political alternative to Republicanism which alone would give him power and meaning as a candidate. We realize the difficulty and danger of the task. Perhaps it simply cannot be done at present. But perhaps, also, it can be done but Al Smith is not the man to do it. If he is going to do it, he will have to begin soon.

SENATOR Nye of North Dakota has issued a platform for the progressives in the next Congress, which is well worth reprinting. Its twelve planks are:

> 1. Pass legislation to make the tariff effective for agriculture. In other words, enact the McNary-Haugen Bill into law or another bill which will accomplish an equally important purpose.
>
> 2. Appropriate ample funds to restore Mississippi levees and inaugurate a control program which will solve the flood problem beyond a shadow of doubt by utilizing wherever possible the flood waters where they can be used to greatest advantage or where they are needed.
>
> 3. Devote any surplus left after flood relief and farm relief requirements have been met to retirement of the national debt; retain the present income tax schedules or increase those schedules in the upper brackets; oppose any attempt to abandon the federal inheritance tax.
>
> 4. Pass the Norris amendment doing away with the short or "lame duck" sessions of Congress.
>
> 5. Institute legislation which will cause the government to operate its resources at Muscle Shoals, selling the surplus power direct to the consumer, this program to hold for all other power developments in which the government may be interested or become interested.
>
> 6. Repeal the McFadden bank bill which legalized branch banking and granted a perpetual charter to Federal Reserve banks, and decline to recharter the Federal Reserve system until such amendments are adopted as will curb the dangerous powers exercised by the Federal Reserve Board.
>
> 7. Ascertain how extensively member banks and bankers are using federal guarantee of private loans. . .
>
> 8. Encourage more definite effort in behalf of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence waterway project.
>
> 9. Abandon all semblance of federal guarantee of private loans made abroad.
>
> 10. Revise pension legislation with the view to adjust pensions with increased living costs.
>
> 11. Make thorough study of the public utility monopoly.
>
> 12. Establish a precedent that cannot be misunderstood, discouraging great campaign expenditures. . . .

With most, if not with all of the items on this program, the New Republic is in cordial agreement. No delusions should be entertained, however, as to the power of the progressives in the next session to bring any important measures such as these into being. They will hold the balance of power, which means that they can prevent undesirable legislation by the Republicans. They can bargain with one side or the other, and gain important minor victories. But the chief item in Senator Nye's program must remain unattainable until a positive majority in favor of such action has been created in House and Senate by the action of the voters at some distant date.

FRANCE has decided not to break with Russia—at least, not yet. The strenuous efforts of M. Briand have been successful. Mr. Rakovsky, the Ambassador, who had aroused the ire of the French by signing a characteristic Communist fulmination about the coming world revolution, is to be replaced by someone else who has not thus implicated himself, or, at least, has not done so lately. The decision is hailed in Moscow as the beginning of a new era, but from this distance it is hard to see much reason for this attitude. France is, on the whole, inclined to follow British policy toward Russia at present. She is not likely to be persuaded to a different attitude by promises in regard to payments on the Russian debt to France, which must, in any case, remain mere paper guarantees for a long time to come. The fact that a break could be threatened on such unimportant grounds as Rakovsky's indiscretion shows how flimsy are the present ties between the two countries.

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IF THE Soviet government achieved a mild victory in retaining its relationship to France, it suffered a mild defeat when the British Trade Unions Congress decided to break with the Russian trade unions. The defeat consisted in Moscow's failure to act first, to the same end. Such a break had long been inevitable; the existing connection was an embarrassment to both sides, and had few compensating advantages for either. The Russians wanted to be free to argue for Communism pure and simple, and to denounce with all their might such opportunism as is represented in the British labor movement as a whole. The British found the Russian relationship an incessant embarrassment in appealing for the support of public opinion in their own country. The break makes for honesty and candor and for a political alignment in Great Britain along more genuine lines of cleavage.

THE visit of the American Legion to France produced two interesting speeches on the same day. Poincaré, the irreconcilable French Premier, used the occasion for an attempt to revive the old war loyalties, asserting over again the justness of the Allied cause and the wickedness of Germany. President Hindenburg, who was ten years ago and in another capacity one of the objects of the doughboys' deepest dislike, took the occasion to assert once more that Germany did not will the War, and that she repudiates the burden of responsibility attributed to her in the Treaty of Versailles. Neither of these speeches, probably, means very much to the Legionnaires. It is our guess that most of them have pretty well forgotten what the War was supposed to be about, and don't care. They went to France this time (a) because of prohibition, (b) to revisit the battlefields and see their former comrades, (c) for the ride. The real interest in the Poincaré and Hindenburg speeches lies not in their effect at the moment, but in their future. Poincaré seeks to revive an emotion which is indubitably dead among Americans and rapidly dying among his compatriots. Hindenburg brings up a question which the Allies have for eight years sought unsuccessfully to suppress; a question which will not down, and must, some day, be given an honest reply.

A FRENCH commission will shortly arrive in Washington to begin negotiations both for a new commercial treaty, and in regard to the present high tariffs on American goods entering France, as a result of which much of our trade is threatened with destruction. It may be taken for granted that the new high imposts are intended by the French as a bargaining point in arranging the treaty terms. But the trouble is that the United States cannot bargain. Under the law, anything like reciprocity is impossible. The President can reduce rates, through the famous flexible-tariff provision, but only on one item at a time, and after the presentation of evidence that comparative costs of production here and abroad warrant such procedure. In practice, as our readers know, the flexible tariff has flexed only one way—upward. It is ironic that America, citadel of protection, should find herself forced to protest the bitter taste of her own medicine when administered by France. But it is also true that French maneuvers, though following precedents perfectly understood on the Continent, will seem to most Americans as undiplomatic as, in this case, ineffective. They will augment an ill-will of which there was far too much already.

THE Cosgrave government in Ireland did not win the decisive victory it hoped to get as a result of its suddenly announced general election. The smaller parties have lost to the larger ones, both of which have gained in about the same ratio. The result, as we go to press, with thirteen districts still missing, shows seventy-one seats in the Dail for Mr. Cosgrave and his allies, sixty-eight for Mr. de Valera and his. While Mr. Cosgrave can carry on temporarily with this amount of support, he is in a difficult and dangerous position, and can be defeated at any time through the defection of the Independent or the Farmer group. Another election is forecast not later than next spring, with, of course, no guarantee that the present results will not be duplicated. Despite the passage of years, despite bad leadership, limited funds and every other obstacle, the movement for an absolutely independent Irish republic goes on, with strength and pertinacity.

THE evils inherent in company unionism, whether well or badly administered, are clearly illustrated in the current dispute between the Pullman Company and its porters. As readers of the New Republic are aware, some time ago an independent union of porters was formed. This union is now striking to obtain for them an increase in wages from $72 to $150 a month; abolition of the tipping system, which the union characterizes as "degrading"; and a reduction of the work month from 400 to 250 hours. Under the present Railway Labor Act, the United States Mediation Board has power to intervene in a dispute over these questions and to endeavor, through its good offices, to arrange a settlement. The Pullman Company, however, has refused to participate in such mediation. It says that it will have nothing to do with the union; that 85 percent of the porters and maids have agreed to its "employee representation" plan (virtually a company union); that no complaints have been made through that channel, and that no attention will be paid to any coming from other quarters.

TO THIS, spokesmen for the union make several replies. They allege that more than one-half the

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porters are now union members; that the acceptance of the employee-representation plan was the result of "intimidation, interference and coercion," a statement it is prepared to support by more than one thousand affidavits; that the contract which the company has with its employees was obtained from non-representative spokesmen for the porters, likewise chosen under "intimidation and coercion"; that the employee-representation plan violates the provisions of the Railway Labor Act, since that statute provides for voluntary self-organization of workers, without pressure; that even the existing contract provides that changes can be made on thirty days' notice, and that a demand for improved status can, therefore, come at any time. Mediation having failed, the union says, the Pullman Company should now submit the dispute to arbitration. As to this, the company makes the same reply as before. It has nothing to arbitrate. In this statement it disagrees with the official United States Mediation Board, which sought successively to gain its consent to mediation and to arbitration. The only legal step now possible, other than a strike, is to have President Coolidge appoint an Emergency Board to handle the dispute. This can only be done if the Mediation Board recommends it, on the ground that a public emergency exists; and just what constitutes an emergency is not clear.

IT IS possible that the Pullman Company, in instituting its employee-representation plan, was actuated by excellent motives. The officials may sincerely believe that the interests of its workers are best served by such an organization. Yet it is clear from the present dispute how difficult it is for the company to show that its motives are honorable. Any company union is always and inevitably under the suspicion of being used as the union charges the representation plan is being used in this case. It is impossible for the employer to prove that his intentions are above reproach, so long as he insists that the organization of employees shall remain under his dictation. When it is also true that men are worked long hours for inadequate wages, as is the case with the porters, the burden of proof on the employer becomes overwhelming. An enlightened labor policy would not merely permit the workers to form an independent organization, but would insist upon it.

BY THE time this issue of the New Republic reaches the hands of most of its readers, the great Dempsey-Tunney fight will be a matter of history, entombed in ten thousand newspaper columns. But it is not too late to observe that the leaders of the manly art of modified murder, as Mr. W. O. McGeehan calls it, seem to be doing their best to ruin their own highly profitable occupation. On the eve of the fight, Mr. Dempsey launched an open letter at Mr. Tunney, accusing him of having tried to "fix" their Philadelphia encounter of a year ago. Mr. Dempsey says the plan was to persuade the referee and one of the judges to give Mr. Tunney the decision if it were at all possible to do so. Something went awry, however, for Jack admits that on that occasion he was beaten "fairly and squarely." Mr. Tunney refused to debate the question, but his manager, Mr. Billy Gibson, was less reticent. Mr. Gibson averred at once that Mr. Dempsey was up to the same skullduggery which preceded his recent fight with Mr. Sharkey. He hints politely that Mr. Dempsey deliberately fouled Mr. Sharkey, after having publicly ridiculed that gentleman for a tendency to claim fouls, and thus inhibited his normal impulse to protest. We should not be greatly surprised to learn that all these various charges were correct. When a championship is worth a million dollars, it is ridiculous to imagine that the standards of gentlemanliness which are supposed to rule a game of tennis or a round of golf will be observed at the cost of a victory. What does surprise us is that the subject should be discussed so openly. If the public keeps on hearing that all fights are "in the bag," will it not get tired of paying $40 each for bad seats? Or do the fans go merely to see each other?

SECRETARY Hoover has again investigated the flood situation at first hand, and reported on it to the President. All but 8 percent of the sufferers have now returned to their homes, 46,000 persons out of a total of 614,000 being still dependent on the Red Cross for food. Most of those who are now being aided will presumably need assistance at least until next spring. Of those who are back in their homes, many thousands are only one step from starvation. They cannot buy needed materials, pay their taxes or meet their private debts, and credit machinery is now being arranged to carry them through until next summer. Secretary Hoover says funds at present in hand will carry on the operations of the Red Cross until January 1. By that time, it is to be hoped, Congress will have acted. Even more serious than the question of continued relief to the victims, at the moment, is that of levee repairs. The river will probably begin to rise again by the end of the year; and many of the crevasses made by the flood have not been closed. Money for this is lacking; the War Department is doing what it can, but funds are limited, and especially since Controller General McCarl refused to permit the transfer of $2,000,000 from the Rivers and Harbors appropriation to the almost empty coffers of the army engineers. Congress will need to work fast, when it does meet, to avoid a repetition, on a smaller scale, of this year's disaster.

THE Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the Department of Agriculture, in the course of a report on cotton a few days ago, said that, under certain specified conditions, "it is likely that prices

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will decline in the next few months." The same statement, in almost the same words, had come from the Bureau several weeks earlier, and had attracted no attention; but this one reached the eyes of Wall Street, and cotton promptly vindicated the prophet by dropping $7.50 a bale, causing a loss on the total crop of about $100,000,000. Frenzied roars of protest from the speculators and from the cotton districts followed; President Coolidge intervened, and Secretary Jardine has announced that no more predictions of prices will be made by his subordinates. This is, doubtless, just as well; the Department has other and more useful functions than making prophecies which are mainly of value to speculators. But what can be said of an industry which is so ignorant of its own basic conditions that a few cautious words, printed for a second time in a government bulletin, can throw it into such a panic? Was a recession due in any case, and is the Department of Agriculture being made the scapegoat?

THE fusion of the Nanking and Hankow governments has at last been completed, the personnel has been announced, and operations have begun at Nanking. A commission of five members will have supreme authority, assisted by the usual group of Ministers. The long delay in the formation of the new government has been indicative of trouble behind the scenes, now evidently settled. The Nationalists have rid themselves of the Communists, and of Chiang Kai-shek, and have acted wisely in doing so; but it is not unlikely that they may have suffered a temporary loss of vitality as a result of the drastic surgical operation.

## The Lesson of It for Liberals

PUBLIC discussion of the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti has practically ceased, but their fate remains a general and absorbing topic of conversation among those people who are intellectually sensitive about the good repute and the moral health of the American nation. Since the New Republic began publication, thirteen years ago, no topic of public importance has aroused keener and more assiduous interest among its readers than the attempt to obtain a new trial for the executed men and the failure of that attempt. We have received hundreds of letters about the subject, and they still continue to come. They express the most divergent states of mind, but chiefly an uneasy conscience—a feeling that this country has suffered a diminution in moral stature, for which somehow we all share the responsibility. A few of the recent contributions are published in another column. Inasmuch as the majority of our correspondents have endorsed the effort of the New Republic to obtain a new trial for the condemned and executed men, it is not a typical selection, but it obtains peculiar interest from the sharply contrasted points of view. One expects, of course, to have the same article produce totally different impressions on the minds of different readers, but to have the New Republic's handling of the subject appraised in the same mail as unpardonably hysterical and admirably self-restrained may give some idea of the unusual extent to which judgment in the matter is troubled by sympathies or antipathies.

Many readers have questioned the New Republic's characterization of the outcome of the agitation as a revelation of liberal impotence in forming and guiding public opinion. We are not willing to withdraw it, but it has been so much misunderstood that it certainly calls for further explanation. In one respect, indeed, the agitation on behalf of a new trial for the accused Italians brought forth a cheering revelation of a common state of mind among people of liberal tendencies. It is notorious that, since the War, they have developed differences of opinion about American foreign and domestic policies which have deprived liberalism of meaning and power. These differences remain, but during the last two months they have, perhaps, become of less importance. With a few minor exceptions, all thorough-going liberals have more or less explicitly questioned the justice of executing Sacco and Vanzetti on the authority of the existing record. With remarkable and encouraging unanimity, the great majority came through, and most of them felt more rather than less strongly about it. To this extent the agitation, in spite of its failure, is a welcome indication of a renewed fellow-feeling among American liberals which will, we hope, survive the recent occasion for its expression.

The practical unanimity is encouraging, because the effort to obtain for Sacco and Vanzetti a new and fairer trial unmistakably involved the essential interest of a liberal philosophy. Liberalism is, of course, fundamentally an attitude of the mind which seeks to bring understanding to bear upon action. It prevails in social life, if at all, less through the functioning of certain liberal institutions such as representative government than through the activity of an alert, aggressive and disinterested public opinion. Its vitality depends upon the ability of the public mind to weigh the different aspects of a subject of public controversy and to distinguish the decisive aspect. After the defenders of Sacco and Vanzetti had exhausted every resource offered by the criminal procedure of Massachusetts to obtain a new trial, they were driven finally to appeal to this tribunal of public opinion. The justice of the appeal was endorsed, as we have said, by the great majority of people of liberal tendencies, including the conservative labor unions and at least three score professors in the law schools of the country. The list of those who, in effect, signed the petition, contained the names of many thousand disinterested and intelligent people of unquestionable patriotism. It seemed

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incredible that Governor Fuller would permit the execution of the two convicts in spite of such conspicuous and unmistakable proof of the existence of a doubt among reasonable and loyal citizens about the justice of the conviction. Yet permit it he did. While his motives were doubtless complicated, the explanation of them is not. He and his advisory commission, consciously or unconsciously, regarded the demand for a new trial on the part of these particular people not as the expression of a reasonable doubt, but as an attempt at intimidation. They were not convinced of the good faith, the validity and the importance of the judgment of these people who had questioned the verdict of the Massachusetts courts. They either had not heard at all from the people whose judgment and good faith they really respected, or what they heard had enforced their own disposition to refuse the appeal. They came to look upon themselves as protagonists in a conflict, rather than as the appraisers of a serious doubt in the public mind which was entitled to consideration.

It was the failure of the liberal protest to impress, except in a hostile way, governing public opinion, which the New Republic meant when it characterized the event as a revelation of liberal impotence. The agitation did not carry any conviction with those socially important mediating minds which occupy the grand-stand of American public opinion. All the professions and all branches of administrative and business activity are manned at the top by certain well intentioned people who concern themselves chiefly with their own work, their own families and their own amusements, and who bother about public questions only as the result of persistent pressure from events or from their trusted leaders. Unlike the professional radicals or the hundred-percenters, they are often open to conviction, but, being inert, preoccupied and prejudiced, they require a great deal of convincing before they will accept an invitation to depart from their regular ways. They will not grasp anything which looks like an aberration unless the recommendation comes from some peculiarly trustworthy source. In ordinary circumstances, the intellectual processes of this group compose the effective public opinion of the country. People who act in the name of the public constantly listen, whether they know it or not, for some indication of how it is moving. If it is not moving at all, they themselves are free to indulge in some vagaries. But if it begins to focus, it is the voice of the master and they cannot oppose it. As we have said, these usually well intentioned people in high places were either indifferent or opposed to the demand for a new trial. They would not have approved the killing of Italian anarchists as a penalty for wishing to overthrow the American state, but they are predisposed in favor of official action, and they distrust "radicals" or people who fuss about injustice to radicals. They did not themselves take the trouble seriously to inquire whether there were serious flaws in the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti, and practically none of the men to whom they look for guidance led them to suspect a miscarriage of justice.

This final fact was chiefly influential in determining their attitude and, consequently, the final decision of Governor Fuller. While the protesting liberals included the names of many men and women who had never been tainted by association with "radical" agitation, they all belonged to the bleachers rather than the grand-stand. They occupied no official positions except in universities or labor unions. We cannot remember any prominent politicians of any party who considered the protest of sufficient importance to investigate it and, if justified, to endorse it. It was none of their business, unless they wished the execution to proceed. No prominent banker or corporation executive, so far as we know, was in the least publicly perturbed at the apparent possibility of the execution for murder of two innocent men. It was none of his business, unless he approved of the killing. There were many lawyers, outside as well as inside the law schools, who publicly declared themselves in favor of a new trial, but, for the most part, the bar throughout the country either affirmed the conviction or did not assume any definite attitude. The few newspapers with large circulations which acknowledged any doubt about the justice of the verdict expressed it in such mild terms that none of their readers would have inferred that the execution of two doubtfully guilty convicts was a matter of considerable importance. The whole official organization of society conspired after a fashion to ignore, to belittle or to condemn the agitation. Some of its members resented the indignation, the dismay and the sorrow of the squeamish people to whom the legal killing of possibly innocent people seemed to be the most unpardonable offense against public morals and security which a society can commit. They condemned such emotion as "hysterical."

We have used the word "conspire," but it should be interpreted with reservations. There was little organized, conscious effort to ignore and discredit the agitation for a new trial. The combination to prevent it operated more effectively and more subtly than any overt conspiracy could have done. In a society such as the United States of today, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the people who occupy responsible administrative positions to lend countenance to any agitation which questions the excellence, as advertised, of the products of the official social machinery. The success of their work depends in part upon the confidence of their associates in their regularity and their amenability. There is a tacit understanding among them not to challenge anything which is official and respectable. They are disposed not only themselves to adopt conformity as a policy but to dislike and distrust nonconformists. A tendency of this kind was powerful in the United States even during the pioneer period

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when the nation was loosely put together, but it is still more powerful in the present era of centralized organization and contagious upper-class feeling. The people who are responsible for administering American business and official activities meet one another more often and more intimately than formerly. They compose a conscious social group which functions in public affairs through collective rather than individual judgment. Their opinions are formed by authority and by conscious or unconscious consultation with one another. They are more than ever impervious to appeals which invoke reason in order to question the verdict of authority.

The chief characteristic of a healthy public opinion is, however, its ability to detect those cases in which the verdicts of authority are reasonably questioned. For the most part, of course, the institutions in a complicated modern society cannot be efficiently operated unless there is a presumption in favor of their regular conduct; and when, in any particular instance, their operation is challenged, the protestants are properly required to put up an unusually clear case. But the Sacco-Vanzetti protest was an unusually clear case. It was manufactured out of several different reasons which reënforced one another and which should have appealed to the officials. It was based not upon a disputed principle, as it might have been if they were political offenders, but upon the principle which underlies American criminal procedure that a conviction for crime should not ignore the existence of a reasonable doubt. That a reasonable doubt existed in this instance is sufficiently proved by the fact that over sixty professors in American law schools who are experts in this kind of evidence testified to this effect. Finally, to execute the convicts, in spite of a serious possibility of their innocence, is to commit a fatal act whose consequences, if it were a mistake, are irrevocable. The reasonableness of the protest, that is, did not depend upon the actual innocence of the accused. If incontestable proof of their guilt were produced next week, it would not discredit those who protested against their execution on the strength of the existing evidence. They have merely insisted that no sufficient proof had as yet been produced. If ever it were produced, the accused could be tried again and convicted again. Assuming, of course, that in the meantime a jury had not pronounced them innocent. No harm would have been done, as it will be done if they are ever proved innocent, or if their innocence remains a matter of reasonable doubt.

As a result, consequently, of the Sacco-Vanzetti affair, two interesting facts emerge about the present standing of liberals in American society. On the one hand, they have for the first time in many years united in picking out a genuinely liberal cause and in rallying behind it. On the other hand, this cause, precisely because of its excellence, proved to be a disquieting touchstone. American liberals united on a sound cause only to be defeated. Its strength and the standing of its supporters aroused no positive interest or conviction among the middle-minded people who fill important administrative positions in American political, professional and business life; and these are the people who not only conduct the activities of the country but determine its immediately effective state of mind. Outside of the labor movement, the universities and a few intellectuals, the number of people who can recognize a distinctively and essentially reasonable cause, which is not also respectable, seems to be practically negligible. The mediating minds do not mediate. They are closed rather than opened up by a protest or a warning from liberal sources. They are, indeed, sensitive about the danger of war, and when the Coolidge policy in Mexico last winter threatened to bring about war, they expressed their scruples with sufficient clearness to make the administration pause. But for the most part they have ceased to pay attention to the voice of anybody who does not also occupy a seat in the grand-stand. They think in relation to public questions as a mass, and in obedience to an authority which they cannot afford to question. It is this bloc state of mind on the part of the responsible people which accounts for the impotence of liberals even when they are united. They would do well to recognize the fact, and to consider its causes and consequences. How far is it their own fault that they count so little in the eyes of their official and responsible fellow countrymen? Can they do anything about it?

# Shall We Have Centralized Banking?

THE long-existing conflict in the Federal Reserve system has at last been brought out into the open. The Chicago bank, ordered by the Federal Board to reduce its rediscount rate from 4 to 3½ percent, has challenged the authority of the Board. Attorney General Sargent has been asked to rule on the legality of the Board's action; and, if he should uphold it, there is talk of an appeal to the courts to settle the matter. There is also talk of a congressional investigation of the whole situation, to see whether new legislation is needed. It is safe to say that much will be heard about it this winter in the House and Senate.

The legal point involved is a difficult one. The Act says that the district banks shall determine rediscount rates weekly, subject to "review and determination" by the Federal Board. In 1919, the Board asked the Attorney General whether it could fix rediscount rates, and he gave a formal opinion, holding that, under the law, it could. Since that time, its authority, though often discussed, has not been seriously challenged. Former Senator Robert L. Owen, who was Chairman of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee and played an

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important part in framing the Act, is sure that the Board acted properly in the Chicago case. On the other hand, Senator Borah and others testify that a clause specifically authorizing such action by the Board was stricken out of the Act before it was passed. Senator Carter Glass, one of the authors of the Act, is now leading the fight for local autonomy. He was formerly Secretary of the Treasury, and in that capacity strongly urged that the Federal Board be authorized to override the local banks; but he explains that he meant this power to be used only when some one bank persisted in maintaining a rediscount rate dangerously low, or so high as to hamper business. This apparently brings the matter down to a definition of terms. That some members of the Board share his present view would seem to be indicated by the four-three vote by which the Chicago decision was made. The resignation of D. R. Crissinger as Governor of the Board (a resignation which, we are told, has no connection with the present controversy) makes it necessary for the President to affirm or repudiate the new policy of the Board, by his appointment of a successor.

Neither side has been quite candid in discussing the reasons for the difference of opinion over the Chicago rate. The Chicago bank heads have inferred that they wished to keep the rediscount rate at 4 percent merely because they saw nothing in the local situation which justified a reduction to the 3½ percent rate which already prevailed in ten of the eleven other districts in the country. But in fact, the Chicago bank was presumably trying to aid its banker clients to support the contention with their debtors that the money market was somewhat tighter than a 3½ percent rate would indicate. The Federal Board has let it be assumed that easier money for crop movements was its chief aim. But another purpose was undoubtedly more important. The former rates in the United States were a factor in the movement of gold to America, which already has locked away in its strong boxes more than one half the world's supply. Such a development, if continued, would put an undesirable strain on the currencies of Western Europe in a time of transition from paper back to the gold standard. For political reasons, the federal authorities do not dare admit that they are acting internationally. But no one who follows the course of events, who has noted the several recent conferences of bank heads from England, France, Germany and the United States, can doubt that this is happening. To-day there is a clear understanding among the financial authorities of Western Europe and the United States; and all important actions are taken in accordance with its terms.

The issue involved in the immediate dispute is a fundamental one, which has never been settled decisively in our history. It is the same which caused the long fight over Hamilton's pet project of a Bank of the United States. Commonly, this question is stated as above, "Shall we have centralized banking?" But this is in fact an over-simplification of it. Centralized banking we are likely to have in any case. By legislation against branch banks, we may be able to prevent the development of a situation like that of England, with only nineteen banks, or France, with twenty; but the process of trustification, which has been the dominant aspect of industrial development during the past generation, applies just as completely to finance. The real question is whether we shall have centralized banking under governmental or private control—by the Federal Reserve Board or by Wall Street; and, if it is to be governmental, shall it be guided by the international situation, or—if there is any conflict of interest—by domestic needs?

Those who advocate federal authority do not suggest that it should be complete and arbitrary. There are many factors in every local situation which can only be known and judged locally. This is certainly true, for example, of the general relations between a reserve bank and the institutions in its district which are its customers. But quite another situation presents itself when one district bank seeks to operate with a rediscount rate at variance with that existing in other parts of the country. Such a situation could easily have the most pronounced effect upon the internal movement of capital, and perhaps even on international developments, if the district were an important one. Advocates of local autonomy have not explained how they propose to meet this difficulty. Unless it is satisfactorily met, it must outweigh all their other arguments.

Any action taken at present, whether by the President, the courts or otherwise, can only be temporary. In the long run, the degree of centralization to be permitted the Federal Reserve System is something the Congress must decide. Before it does so, we are likely to have an extended—and, let us hope, illuminating—debate on the exact part which banking plays in our present economic organization, and specifically, on the precise effect of the Federal Reserve System's alterations in the rediscount rate.

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# The Charge of the Tax-Dodgers' Brigade

NO tax is so obnoxious to the wealthy tax-dodger as the inheritance tax. His property consists mostly of stocks, bonds, and mortgages. It either entirely escapes taxation by the local authorities, or is taxed only on the small portion returned for assessment. So far as state, county, and municipal taxes are concerned, it is easy to evade them. From the federal taxes there is also an avenue of escape for the tax-dodger by investment in tax-exempt bonds, by the formation of investment corporations, and many other methods known to expert tax-attorneys. But alas, he must in time go the way of all flesh, and depart from this earth without being able to take a penny of this property with him. As he reflects upon this situation, his mind is filled with mingled indignation and despondency over the fact that the time is coming when nothing can prevent a portion of this property being taken and used to support the government which, together with the industry and thrift of its citizens, has enabled him to accumulate a vast fortune. He wishes to perpetuate this fortune in the possession of his children and die happy in the thought of how it will continue to pile up unearned millions through all time.

But upon his death his property can be concealed no longer. In order that his heirs may get a clear title thereto, it must all be listed and inventoried by his executor. Even the tax-exempt bonds are exempt only as to the income from them, and are subject to the estate tax. The list will be before the court, and subject to the gaze and comment of an unsympathizing public, which often is unable to see how the heirs can use, with any benefit to themselves, the enormous sums which will be left to them after the tax is paid. There is not a ray of hope anywhere. The tax cannot be evaded if he owns the property when he dies, nor can it be shifted, as some taxes are, to those lower down in the scale of property ownership.

No one would expect that such a condition would be quietly endured by the tax-dodger, but few are aware of the extensive campaign that has been waged for the repeal of the federal inheritance tax and the powerful and all-pervading propaganda that has been carried on in support of it, with the purpose not merely of misleading, but actually of deceiving, the public.

The present form of federal estate taxation was first imposed in 1916, during President Wilson's administration. The rates were then low, the maximum being 10 percent. These rates were increased during the World War and subsequently. The highest rates were under the Act of 1924, which gave an exemption of $50,000, taxed the next $50,000 1 percent, and thereafter graded the tax up to 40 percent on the amount of the estate above $10,000,000. The Act of 1926 raised the exemption to $100,000 and lowered the maximum rate to 20 percent on the amount of an estate in excess of $10,000,000. It also contained a retroactive provision which practically annulled the increase in the rates made by the Act of 1924. How this was done will be shown hereafter. The great newspapers have been discreetly silent about it.

Meanwhile a situation arose under which the tax-dodgers saw an opportunity to get rid of both the federal and the state inheritance taxes. In 1924, the state of Florida adopted a constitutional amendment forbidding the imposition of any income or inheritance tax in that state. The obvious purpose was to make a bid for the residence of those possessing great fortunes, in the belief that that state would be greatly benefited by the property and wealth which those persons would bring into it. The scheme was very attractive. Florida became a haven of tax-dodgers, and many wealthy men changed their residence accordingly. It was a very easy matter. Those who possessed great estates in the East usually had a house in Florida; if not, it was a small matter to them to obtain one, and easy for them to say that their residence was in Florida. But while this would enable them to escape the state inheritance tax, they would still be subject to the federal tax. An organization was accordingly formed, originally known as the American Bankers' League, for the purpose of carrying on a propaganda for the repeal of the federal inheritance tax. This organization was lavishly financed, and it carried on its operations in all parts of the country. It hired speakers, gave banquets, and, at the time the 1926 Revenue Act was being prepared, paid the expenses of a large number of persons, more or less prominent, in going to and from Washington, where they appeared *en masse* before the Ways and Means Committee. Some of these people were paid large fees in addition.

Its agents worked assiduously on the members of the various state legislatures. Wherever possible, a legislature was prevailed upon to adopt a resolution asking for the repeal of the federal inheritance tax. The wealthy men of each community were quietly organized to write to or work upon the several members, and in this way the

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legislatures of several states were induced to adopt such a resolution. One J. A. Arnold was selected as the managing head of the propaganda work. Mr. Arnold was an old hand at the art of influencing legislation, and he saw to it that the press of the country was flooded with articles against the federal tax.

The Bankers' League was not content with attacking the law. It also made a strong effort to stir up opposition against members of the House who were most prominent in support of this tax, and its agents were especially active in the districts represented by W. R. Green, of Iowa, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, and John W. Garner, of Texas, ranking Democratic member thereof, both of whom were opposed to repealing the federal inheritance tax.

It was, of course, necessary to give some reason for the repeal of this tax. It was difficult to find one, but the reason generally given was that the states needed the revenue from the inheritance taxes and it was even claimed that the states might use it to relieve the farmers from taxation. But among the people generally, the idea was spread that the federal law taxed every small estate very heavily. This belief was so wide-spread that one party, brought to Washington to appear before the Ways and Means Committee, spoke of every farmer's estate being taxed 40 percent and was very much surprised to learn that the estate of not one farmer in five hundred in the region where he resided would pay any tax whatever. Even the governors of several states, who were brought before the Ways and Means Committee by the Bankers' League, after they came to understand the situation, declared themselves in favor of the tax.

It ought to be said that there were some who in good faith believed and urged that the federal inheritance tax should be repealed in order that the states might themselves make greater use of it; but the real purpose of the great majority of those who joined in this movement was to further their own selfish ends and have all inheritance taxes stricken from our statute books. A glance at the situation will show that, if there were no federal inheritance tax, nothing but a nominal tax could be imposed on the great estates. If the federal tax were repealed, if any state undertook to impose an inheritance tax which would take any considerable sum from the great fortunes, the result would simply be that the owners thereof would take up their residence either in Florida or the District of Columbia, where they would be exempt. If the federal tax is repealed, Florida will not be the only paradise for the tax-dodger, for other states will follow its example.

It will be seen that the Bankers' League had a far-reaching program. Accordingly, with the purpose of getting rid of inheritance taxes entirely, this powerful organization concentrated its forces on the last Congress. The pressure was so great that many Congressmen weakened. Even the President was persuaded to make a speech before the National Tax Association in which he favored the repeal of the federal tax. The Secretary of the Treasury, as was to be expected, added his recommendation. But the plan met with determined opposition. Those still opposed to its repeal finally consented to an increase in the exemption to $100,000 and the reduction of the maximum rate to 20 percent on the amount of an estate above $10,000,000. All the force of the claim that the states needed the revenue was taken away by a provision that the amount of any inheritance tax paid under state laws might be credited on the federal inheritance tax up to 80 percent thereof. This provision enabled the several states to use the inheritance tax much more broadly than they had theretofore, without increasing the total amount of tax on their citizens, and took away practically all of the advantage of residing in Florida, which was, of course, one reason for its enactment. The state tried to have this provision set aside as unconstitutional, but the Supreme Court saw no merit in the contention.

When the 1926 bill went from the House to the Senate, the Senate not only struck out the House provisions and provided for a repeal of the inheritance tax, but also inserted a provision by virtue of which all of those estates which had paid the rates of the 1924 act were put back under the 1921 rates and were to be refunded the difference in the amount assessed. The House conferees refused to give up the inheritance tax, but the Senate conferees were determined that there should be no bill unless the rates of the 1921 act were substituted during the period the 1924 act operated. No such retroactive provision had ever before been inserted in a tax statute by Congress. Under it, millions of dollars were to be handed back to estates like that of Duke, estimated at between $150,000,000 and $200,000,000, and that of Clark, which was somewhat less. But finally, enough of the House conferees yielded on this point so that the Senate provision was adopted. A prominent member of the House afterwards said that this provision was enough to defeat any member either of the House or the Senate who had supported it, if the country knew the facts. But the country never learned of them. Not half a dozen newspapers in the country said anything about the matter.

The organization for the repeal of the federal inheritance tax has since changed its name, but not its purpose. It now calls itself the American Taxpayers' League. It ought to be called the American Tax-Dodgers' League.

There is no tax more meritorious than the federal inheritance tax and none that has a better basis in sound economics. It cannot be said that it operates in any way to check ambition, initiative, or efficiency. Nothing is more absurd than to say

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it is a tax on the dead. It is not a tax on the dead. It is a tax on the living who have received something for nothing, a tax upon luck and good fortune rather than on work either of the hand or the brain. It is a fair tax, for it only asks wealth to pay its fair proportion of taxes, and it always leaves an abundance for the needs of those who have been the recipients of the bounty of the decedent. Wild stories have been spread by the Taxpayers' League as to the hardships that it imposes. These yarns have no basis in fact. Six years' time can be obtained in which to pay the tax. The estates upon which it is levied consist principally of stocks, bonds, and other intangible property. It is notorious that this class of property escapes taxation nearly entirely, while investigations have shown that the farmers are paying about one-third of their net income in taxes on their farms, and the owner of a cottage is oppressively taxed. Those who oppose the inheritance tax are quite willing that the several states shall continue the oppressive taxation which now weighs so unjustly upon the farmer and the small property owner who cannot pass along the tax, while they fill the air with cries about the hardships of the inheritance tax.

The great fortunes of this country have been, and are now, increasing both in numbers and in size with astonishing rapidity. No other country in the world at all compares with ours in this respect. All the rest of the world taken together does not hold as many great estates. Millionaires are numerous; many people have come to think that the word "millionaire" means a person who has an income of a million dollars a year. Every effort is made to perpetuate these fortunes by provisions in wills, intended to restrict the control of the beneficiaries and prevent the fortunes from dissipation. Such a condition endangers our whole social system and is a menace to our institutions. Some newspapers, prompted, it is likely, by the Taxpayers' League, have denounced inheritance taxes generally as "communistic" and "Bolshevistic." These epithets are the favorite argument of the Bourbon reactionary and probably deceive few. Everyone knows that Theodore Roosevelt favored levying a heavy progressive tax on inherited wealth. Andrew Carnegie, too, was a strong supporter of such a tax. All economists pronounce it sound in theory and in practice, and the great commercial nations of the world universally use it. The rates of our federal and state inheritance taxes taken together are very light compared to those of England, France, or Germany. In fact, if we levied inheritance taxes in the same proportion to our national wealth that Great Britain does, we would collect eight or ten times as much.

The great fortunes of this country were not built up out of the resources of the locality where the owner resided. Almost universally they were, like Mr. Ford's, gathered from the savings of the whole country. The federal government ought to receive something from this source, and it should not be left to the several states to enforce, even if it were practical to do so. Moreover, a levy upon inheritances is the only way to reach the tax-exempt securities issued so freely by the states and municipalities.

All of these considerations count for nothing with the Taxpayers' League. Its brigade of lobbyists and tax-dodgers will again charge upon Congress at the next session, and it must be said that, unless public opinion is awakened and aroused, the attack will be difficult to resist. Neither of the two great parties has ever ventured to declare in favor of such a proposition, and it is not likely that either ever will. It would be giving too much publicity to the effort that is being made. The movement would not have the slightest chance of success, if the people generally understood what was being done and the effect of the repeal of the federal estate tax. But they do not, and in the coming contest organized wealth has every advantage.

"POLITICAL ECONOMIST."

# In Autumn

## Net

This miserable passionate little net
Of flesh where flounders beauty's glittering fin,
Where the song caged in its gold cabinet
Beats out its wings, with drowsy medicine
Is drugged, and rarely, by a few sharp cries,
The blood upon its beak and on its wings,
Obtains the brief pavilion of the skies
And at the shoulder of the morning sings—
This is the body of my death, the dear
Disaster of my purple ship that no
Salvage can lift level to the clear
Gaze of some ardent archipelago:
The tangled fish will break his silver oar,
The bird will die, the boat will ride no more.

JOSEPH AUSLANDER.

## The Cupola

A mirror hangs on the wall of the draughty cupola.
Within the depths of glass mix the beech and the oak leaf,
Once held to the bough's shape, but now to the shape of the wind.

Someone has hung the mirror here for no reason
In the shuttered room, an eye for the drifted leaves,
For the oak leaf, the beech, a handsbreadth of darkest reflection.

Someone has thought alike of the bough and the wind
And struck their shape to the wall. Each in its season
Spills negligent death throughout the abandoned chamber.

LOUISE BOGAN.

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# Servants of the Spindle

## II — *The Mill Village*

STRANGELY enough, the owners of Southern cotton mills have been criticized more severely for their child labor and their paternalism than for their low wages and long hours. The emphasis has been wrongly placed. The labor of young children, as we pointed out last week, has been prohibited in all Southern mills, and the proportion of children who are left in the mills is approximately the same in the North as in the South.

It is easy to indict the paternalism of Southern mill owners, but it is difficult to see how that paternalism could have been avoided without recourse to something worse. If the mill owners did not build houses for their workers, where would those workers live? In a comparison between company-owned towns and workers' residential sections in which the houses do not belong to the company, the standard mill village appears to overwhelming advantage. Across the state line from each other on the border of Southern Georgia are Columbus, Georgia, and Phoenix, Alabama. In Columbus, the Bibb Manufacturing Company has erected one of the most beautiful and modern mill villages in the South, with well kept streets, a library, a swimming pool, a free clinic and modern houses renting for less than one half of the charge for similar houses adjoining the mill village in Columbus. Across the river in Phoenix live many of the workers from other Columbus mills which do not have mill villages. Phoenix is a dingy slum. It has few social advantages and no beauty. Its houses, owned by private realtors, rent for more than the mill village houses.

The theory that in an ideal mill community the workers should own their own houses is untenable when applied to the Southern mills as they are now operated. The one freedom which the worker possesses is the freedom to move on to another mill. He has no right to protest, no organized power, no vehicle for expressing his wants, but he can quit the job immediately if he does not like mill conditions. The right to move cheaply is his Magna Charta, Declaration of Independence and Communist Manifesto. If he once started to make payments upon a home, he would lose that sacred mobility.

In actual practice, the mill worker asserts his right to move on almost continuously. He wanders from mill to mill, frequently averaging a change of location every year. He has been dubbed "the mill village hobo." He has learned to travel light, which practice explains the great shortage of furniture in many mill houses. In the days of keen competition for labor, the mills sometimes paid the expenses of workers to move to a new village; even today, many mill superintendents advance money for moving and take it back in instalments from the pay envelope.

This mill village hobo is by no means a degenerate type. He may be a normal worker who finds in moving his one assertion of independent judgment. A recent study by the Womens Bureau of the Department of Labor revealed an enormous turnover in the labor force of Southern mills. The Southern mills showed a turnover of 189.5 percent, while the Northern mills had about half of that proportion, or 94.9 percent.

The pioneer mill owners of the South faced the prodigious task of taking an illiterate mountain and farm population and molding them into an industrial community. It is evident that the workers were not ready then and are not ready now for intelligent construction of their communities. The mill owners have been, perhaps, too self-conscious in their village philanthropy, but the mechanical result is praiseworthy. While we found a few mill villages with no doctors, no social work, with kerosene lamps, outside toilets, overcrowded rooms, and wells in the back yard of every fourth house, these villages are the exception, and they usually serve very small mills. The large new mills are commonly providing their workers with the residential advantages of a city, and a good deal of intelligent social service is in evidence.

Architecturally, there is much to be desired. The composite Southern mill house is a flat wooden box, one story in height and lifted up from the ground by brick and wooden piles. Inside, the rooms are square—that is an adequate description. The older mill villages consisted of rows and rows of houses exactly alike—the same porch, the same paint, the same railing. In the newer villages, there is sufficient variety to satisfy the most befuddled person seeking to identify his home at night. One house will have a solid porch rail and the next a picket rail. One will have a flattened gable and another a peak. The first house in the row will be white, trimmed with green, the second green, trimmed with white, the third all white. And then back to the style of the first again.

The esthetic agony of living in a community of that type may easily be overemphasized. What a tremendous psychological compensation the mill worker must get by not having to keep up with the Joneses in residential *éclat*! His house is as

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good as anybody's house. His desire for individual esthetic expression may be satisfied in his garden. Moreover, the air, light and space that he gets in a Southern mill village are quite superior to the same surroundings of a Northern city worker.

Paternalism, however, has a psychological debit for every physical credit. What the mill workers gain in well repaired roofs and inside toilets, they lose in community control. The mill and the mill village, the community house and often the school belong to the boss. The owner subsidizes or owns almost every institution in the village. He pays the taxes and controls local politics, if any. The worker has neither standing as a citizen nor training for citizenship apart from the dominant figure of his industrial overlord.

The workers themselves do not seem to feel this loss keenly; to them a repaired roof seems more important than a share in the control of the local school board or the right to hold a union meeting. In many conversations with workers, we never heard an objection to the paternalism of the mill village. Perhaps that is the greatest tragedy of the mill workers' lives. They seem to have lost a sense of values in the realm of political and economic citizenship, if they ever had any such sense. They show little interest in the ballot. They look and act "washed out." Their mill pallor seems appropriate to their personality.

The utter subjection of the worker in the mill village is chiefly due to the isolation of the mill community from the outside world. The mill village is physically and psychologically a world apart. The mill workers do not mix freely with the people of the cities and towns near them. Intermarriage with the outside community is rare. The mill workers have their own churches, which are usually very poor ones, their own schools and their own social life. They feed into the mills almost automatically, seldom seeking for an outlet into some other career. It is not surprising that, with this isolation, they have failed to produce any Southern leaders.

It would be wrong to blame the mill owners and the mechanism of the mill village exclusively for this isolation of the workers. The whole South must bear the blame, because it has virtually ostracized the "poor whites," with whom the mill workers are classed. The mill workers, partly in self-defense, have developed a pretty strong pride of their own. They teach a clannishness to their children which is not unlike the provincial pride of the mountaineers. Despised by the farming people from whom they sprang, they return the contempt with good measure. They are proud of their American stock, because it is the only recognized sign of social caste that they have left, and they are encouraged in this pride by the mill owners, who boast of the racial qualities of their employees.

Aside from these traditional factors in mill village isolation, there are other economic and social factors which help to isolate the workers; the lack of alternative employment in other industries, the anti-union policy of the mill owners, and the separateness of the mill schools. Of these three, the most important is, probably, the lack of alternative employment. The development of other manufacturing industries in the South will do more than any other one thing to break down the present isolation and improve the standards of wages and hours in the cotton mills.

The mill owners have deliberately destroyed every attempt by the workers to unite their forces in recognized labor unions. The struggle for the right to organize has been long and bitter, ending last year in the complete abolition of every vestige of trade unionism. Strikers of Henderson, N. C., have recently formed a new local union, but whether they can maintain the organization depends entirely upon victory in the strike. "The Solid South," boasts The Manufacturers Record, "means security for every manufacturer trembling under the anarchistic labor leaders, to every manufacturer hovering under the rim of radical labor's volcano."

There is grim humor in associating the United Textile Workers of America, one of the most conservative unions in existence, with "radical labor's volcano." The union has fought many years in the South for those ordinary practices of the eight-hour day and collective bargaining, which more fortunate workers have possessed with little struggle. While the quality of the union's Southern leadership has been at times a handicap, it is doubtful if any union with the most perfect leadership could have battered its way to power against the overwhelming opposition of the mill owners. The employers have had every weapon for success at their command, control of the local press, the unqualified right to discharge any worker who joined a union, eviction of "undesirables" from the mill houses, appointment of local police, and exclusion of union organizers from the mill village. A few mill owners have employed and still employ the "yellow dog contract." The Callaway Mills of La Grange, Georgia, for example, have a most intelligent program of social and educational service coupled with a contract which they compel every worker to sign, binding him never to join a labor organization while he is in the employ of the company.

The revival of trade unions in the Southern mills depends chiefly upon the willingness of the American Federation of Labor to spend large sums of money in a carefully planned campaign. The United Textile Workers, with only a small Northern membership (not more than 30,000), cannot undertake the fight alone; its sacrifices in the past in attempting to organize Southern workers have been more strenuous and heroic than is commonly realized, and its defeats have been due partly to lack of funds. The employer's control of the mill village does not prevent organizing activity in the largest centers of the South in which several mill

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villages are clustered around a city, such as Columbus or Charlotte.

It is evident that the initiative in improving the conditions of the mill workers must come from outside the mill village. The workers are as much in need of middle-class support as were the cotton-mill workers of England a hundred years ago. The tragedy of their present situation is that few voices in the South are raised in their behalf. Social workers hired by kindly mill owners give excellent personal service, but they are not free to criticize the worst features of village life, the labor policies of the mills. The University of North Carolina has produced some brilliant studies of certain phases of mill village life, but almost no reformers —and reformers are needed in the present situation even more than scholars. Some of the worst factory conditions in America exist within a stone's throw of the University of Georgia at Athens—and are completely ignored.

The great newspapers of the South boom on with the voice of industrial expansion, not stopping to record any doubt concerning the wisdom of basing that expansion on low labor standards. Even if these newspapers were sufficiently impartial to carry news about the grievances of the mill workers, there are almost no agencies of labor and liberal thought creating "copy" by public agitation. The League of Women Voters is one possible exception. The mill workers are silent, incoherent, with no agency to express their needs.

While the mill workers are voiceless because of fear and ignorance, the mill owners have allowed themselves to drift into the control of their most violently anti-labor spokesmen. The Southern Textile Bulletin, a small weekly published at Charlotte, gives currency to the most gross misstatements of fact concerning Southern wages, the cost of living, labor unions and reformers. It denounced bitterly the forty bishops and other religious leaders of the South who recently signed a very mild letter calling for consideration of mill village isolation and poverty. Its violence and bitterness have obscured the fact that there are liberal and intelligent employers among the mill owners who would like to improve labor standards and give the workers more participation in mill and village control.

A movement for humane standards in Southern cotton mills would naturally begin with a campaign of education concerning the evils of the ten and eleven-hour day and the eleven and twelve-hour night. Beyond that lies the long road of education for and practice of responsible collective bargaining. The task of education and reform is almost exclusively a Southerner's task. It calls for consummate courage and tact with no guarantee against futility and ridicule.

PAUL BLANSHARD.

*(This is the second of two articles by Mr. Blanshard. The first appeared in our issue of Sept. 21.)*

# Lobsters for Supper

I WOKE up in a country club. When I got out of bed, it was quite late and there was a tennis match going on below my window. I saw the dimmed and mist-dampened tennis courts, from which the sounds of the game came subdued and rather sparse. Slender Boston girls, in gray and brownish coats, stood with their backs to me, looking on—they were smart and, in that boyish way, graceful. Beyond, there were people sitting on benches; I was able to tell the girls from the men only by their whitish crossed legs. It was one of those murky damp days past mid-August when one already foretells the fall, and as I very slowly and dreamily made my toilet in the bathroom, I derived from the fields and dark trees, seen from the window through the haze-thickened air, a quiet enjoyment as I first caught the flavor of that rich lapsing of the long American autumn which makes us taste a kind of freshness even in the beginnings of sadness and decay. The dining-room was empty when I went down, but I enjoyed having breakfast alone: the brightly sprig-flowered curtains and the light slender-runged chairs seemed nice and clean like my hands, which, I reflected, had not been so clean since I had gone up to camp for the summer. I read the headlines of the Boston paper, which said, "Supreme Court Decides Sacco Appeal Today"—then I read the meager paragraphs which followed and, as there seemed to be nothing else in the paper but advertisements and syndicated comic features, I turned to a copy of Life, which had an amusing cover by John Held in blue and red.

Afterwards, I sat around on a large dark porch enclosed in glass, and presently Ralph appeared with the two girls. "Do you feel testy this morning?" said Julia. "We're all feeling pretty testy." "No," I said, "I feel good-natured to a fault." "Just a hail fellow well met!" said Julia. "Just a kind-faced old man!" I said. "You look unusually fresh, I think," I said. And so they always did—they were not Boston girls, but Californians and had the well grown figures and strong color of the West. Julia was dressed in white straw shoes with interwoven strands of red, light straw-colored stockings, a blue-and-red flowered straw-colored skirt, a light blue close-fitting jersey and a pinkish violet scarf around her neck, which echoed and complemented both the red of the pattern of her shoes and the blue of the jersey. I reflected that they were two of the best-dressed girls I had ever known: they had also that amusing vocabulary of their own—which made them use "testy" in that way, for example. "When I look at those white teeth," I said, "that clear skin—that clear tanned ruddy skin—and those wide eyebrows and dark eyes—I realize that you are two of the handsomest girls in the country!" "That's just the inclemency of the weather," said Lynn. Julia and I laughed, but Ralph only smiled by stretching his mouth: his eyes behind his rimless spectacles were already slits and could be little narrowed by laughter. The things the girls said always seemed just beyond him: either such things as he wouldn't have thought worth saying or as he wouldn't have cared to see said so quickly—at any rate, such things as made conversation in which he couldn't take a real part. Yet, at the same time, he evi-

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dently derived gratification from the consciousness of possessing a wife and a sister-in-law who pleased people as much and made them laugh, as Lynn and Julia did. And in his way, he imitated them. "Well, what shall we order," said Lynn, who had just caught sight of a waiter. "Sarsaparilla with cream?—Four sarsaparillas with cream?" "I don't know whether I could stand that," I said. "It's nourishing," said Julia. "It makes it possible to dispense with lunch entirely." "Yes," said Lynn. "It's not only nourishing, but it takes away your appetite for hours." "Oh, all right!" I said.

Ralph picked up the paper and read the headlines about Sacco and Vanzetti. I had tactfully refrained from mentioning the subject the evening before. "Some of your friends were up here," he said. "Bill Morris came rushing over to Hoppner and Post to get us to cash a hundred-dollar check for him to bail the others out." "What do you think about it all?" I asked. "I think it's a shame," he said, "to arrest people like Powers Hapgood for speaking on Boston Common—he was making a perfectly law-abiding speech. Boston Common has been supposed to be a public forum ever since the Revolution." I thought he was going to draw some conclusion from this, but he stopped at that. "What do you think about the merits of the case?" I said. "I think they ought to have a new trial," he said, "but they haven't got a chance in the world. Fuller is a hard-boiled politician. They never had a chance with that committee: Grant is *non compos mentis,* and of all the prejudiced people in Boston—and everybody in Boston is more or less prejudiced (including myself)—Lowell is probably the most prejudiced. He's very successful at raising endowments for Harvard and he's developed a mind and a technique suitable for getting money out of millionaires, but as a person to conduct an impartial investigation, he's no good at all.—I've given up saying anything about it, though—when I try to argue about it at the club, everybody jumps on my neck." The New Englanders, did, after all, I reflected, express themselves in a plain-spoken fashion: as a matter of fact, I had never assumed myself that the Governor's Advisory Committee was a farce: I had supposed that it was made up of more or less intelligent men, and I had imagined something like a play by Galsworthy, in which everybody does the wrong thing from devoted and conscientious motives.—"I've been absolutely sure they were innocent," said Julia, "ever since I read how Vanzetti said, 'I am innocent of these two harms!' I'm sure that nobody who would say that could have done anything really bad—do you think so? 'I am innocent of these two harms.'"

The sarsaparilla and cream arrived. We drank it—and I felt a little sick. Then they began to debate what we should do. Lynn suggested going for dinner—we had had breakfast too late for lunch—to the Bass Point House—but Ralph disapproved of this—though, it seemed, he had been in the habit of taking her there before they were married. "As long as he's got to take the seven-thirty train," he said, "—that is, eight-thirty daylight-saving, we'd better have dinner in town." "Let's go to the Squamscott Club!" said Lynn. "No, that takes a long time, too," he said. "Let's go to Mother's apartment and have a regular lobster supper!" "Sea-food," said Julia. "Shore dinner," said Lynn. They were ironic in their western way, but he was only partly aware of it. "I'll cook them myself," he said. "I'll get you a most toothsome dinner!" I also realized that he was probably afraid that, if he took us to the Squamscott Club, I might try to make a speech about Sacco and Vanzetti. So we presently started off in the car: it was quite a long ride to Boston. "Well," said Lynn, "where's that snack?" "It's in that side-pocket," said Ralph, who was driving. She got out a ginger-ale bottle, which Ralph in his neat, careful way had wrapped up in a piece of newspaper and tied with a string, and some paper cups in a pasteboard box. "We brought along a little snack," she said. It was alcohol and ginger-ale. "Well, it's a relief to have the ginger-ale famine over," I said. "I hope that drink I concocted last night didn't make you ill." I had tried mixing lime-juice and alcohol, after the ginger-ale had given out. "Oh, yes," said Lynn. "What an awful drink that was: it tasted like turpentine!" "You did put a flower in it, though," said Julia. "You insisted on putting a snapdragon petal in each one, so that, while it may not have been a very good drink, it was really awfully pretty. I'd like to have a dress like that," she added. "Sort of a deep garnet on an acidulous yellow—I've never seen anything like it." "You'd have to have green eyes," said Lynn, "to wear that color—green eyes and reddish hair."—"Do you smell the condemned clams?" she went on, as the rank stagnancy of shore-mud immersed us. "What do you mean?" I inquired. "Are the clams here really condemned?" "Yes," she said, "all the clams are condemned between Nahant and Revere Beach. You can smell them." "That smell hasn't got anything to do with the clams," said Ralph. "It's just the way the water smells." "No," said Lynn. "I'm sure it's the clams." "Well, you're absolutely crazy," said Ralph, in his insistent, even-tempered way. "That smell has nothing to do with the clams. It's the way this has always smelt in summer." "There are two people clamming," she said, indicating two distant figures. "Two condemned people clamming for condemned clams." "Only condemned people are allowed to go clamming here," supplemented Julia. We didn't, however, pursue the joke. "Well," said Ralph, "if you insist on having it that Revere Beach smells of condemned clams, you're at liberty to think so: but it's silly to tell people that."—We presently began to sing: the girls, who had practised much and were admirable together, sang "I can be happy, I can be glad, It all depends on you—" and, at my request, one of their most successful selections, which they had learned on a cruise to the West Indies and which always reminded them, they said, of the nights on deck: "Forsaken—forsaken—forsaken I lie—Like a stone by the roadside, while men pass me by." I had got so that, when I heard it, I was myself no longer conscious of an effect of pathos, but felt only the beauty of some southern night, the wide air of some white clean ship, and those girls' voices with their dear American clearness, with their dear American gaiety and freedom. Ralph sang "Flamin' Mamie, the Sure-Fire Vamp," of which, as it were in competition with the girls, he had learned all the words and all the verses, and which he rendered without expression, but with complacency. I was inspired to remember one of those

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old nonsense college songs, in a vein so different from our present one, that it seemed to have some of the strangeness and the mystery of folk poetry, and was received with amazed laughter.—"Do you want to go past the prison where Sacco and Vanzetti are?" Julia asked me. "We can go that way."—"You can't go past," said Ralph. "The road's closed: they won't let cars go by."

We crossed the Charles and went up Beacon Hill. I looked out at the eighteenth-century streets, with their narrow roadways, their British-looking chimney-pots, their walls of solid-laid red bricks wearing the formidable dinginess of antiquity; those silver knobbed doorways of Bulfinch that melt like music on the eye: white doors with white Ionic columns and wide fanlights as clear as crystal, flanked by clear white-curtained panes. We turned off into obscurer streets and Ralph apologized: "You may think I'm taking you slumming," he said, "but I know where to get lobsters—I know whereof I drive." We stopped in front of a fish-market and while Ralph was inside, I went to the corner and bought a paper, but there was nothing in it yet.—"Be careful of that," said Ralph, handing in his package. "Oh, are those lobsters?" said Lynn, handling the paper bag gingerly. "Those are lobsters," said Ralph. There were little holes in the bag for them to breathe through.

When we drew up at Ralph's mother's apartment, to my astonishment he produced from under a lap-robe one of those great glass gallon jugs which they use in that part of the world for alcohol. "Great Scott!" I said. "Is that alcohol? I thought we drank that all up last night!" "It's a magic jug," he said, his eyes narrowing with pleased satisfaction. "It's full again every morning." "The Hoppner wonder-jug," said Lynn. "The old oaken bucket," said Julia.—The apartment was old-fashioned and nice. Sitting on a couch, while Ralph mixed the drinks, among the bare floors and shrouded furniture of summer, I breathed the odor of an old city house which at first made me think vividly of New York, then surprised me as I reflected that there was another place in America where one smelt the city—the old-fashioned civilized city—as one did in New York. That fragrance of the city interior, which I used to catch so deliciously when as a child I came up from the country during the holidays to visit my uncle in New York, spoke through my nose to my mind in terms, not of odor, but of interest: it seemed to me that, where dark drawing rooms and libraries smelt like that, there life was interesting. And assailed through that most searching of the senses, I realized for the first time, as it were, through my own experience, how interesting Boston had been. And, for a moment, my pleasure was disturbed by some uneasiness that a city which, through that association of childhood, touched my imagination and thrilled me with its romance should have come to seem to me so completely uninteresting that, when I had got out at the South Station on my arrival, I had not said to myself, "This is Boston!" but had thought more of the Santa Barbara which I was to find in Lynn and Julia, than of the Boston I was to find in Ralph.—There were an engraving from Raphael; some photographs of Italy; a painting of Roman ruins enveloped in that peculiar gloomy blue-green haze which keeps the atmosphere, at once romantic and stuffy, of the nineteenth century; and a little picture of Psyche in the Underworld, looking straight out with a pure oval face and limpid innocent eyes—like the heroine, I reflected, of some serial in the old Century Magazine. I had met Ralph's mother and liked her: she was a very old lady, who wore a great green eyeshade, and I had always been surprised that an old lady with an eyeshade should know so much of what was going on about her, or that so dowdily dressed an old lady should talk so well. She had known Sumner, Emerson and Holmes, and it was said that she had been more than a little in love with Dickens when he had stayed with her family in Boston. Her father had been Hoppner, of Hoppner and Post, the publishers, and Ralph still worked with the house.—He soon came back with a round of drinks and handed them around unsmilingly, but with self-satisfaction—and we found no reason to quarrel with that gratification. Presently, he began to sing: "I can be happy, I can be glad, It all depends on gin!" We thought that was pretty good. Then he showed me some of the first editions in the bookcase: they were mostly brownish-yellow and had things written in them with faded yellow ink.—"Well," said Lynn, "How about something to eat?" "Yes," said Julia. "Have the men from Rumpelmayer's come?—That's my prize line," she explained to me. "I got it out of some English novel." Ralph held up the bag: "Here they are!" he declared. "Would you like to see them? Would it whet your appetite?" "Oh, no: don't!" said Lynn. "I hate them!" So Ralph carried them off in the bag. "Well, I hate to do this," he said. "But I love to eat 'em!" "Do they boil them alive?" said Julia. "Yes: I guess so," I replied. "Oh, how awful!" she said.—"Oh, I meant to ask you," I said, following an association of shore dinners, "What's become of Lois and Ed? Did you see them when you were out there?" "Oh, it's so terrible!" she replied. "Lynn and I are so depressed about it! She's in love with somebody else and he won't give her a divorce because he's still so in love with her. He finally disappeared, you know, and went on a terrible bender—he went up to San Francisco—and nobody knew where he was—and Lois thought he'd killed himself. And then finally he turned up, looking haggard and wan and as if he hadn't changed his clothes for weeks—you know how spick and span he always used to be! He just came into the house and asked where the goldfish with the black tail was—they'd had a goldfish with a black tail that he was particularly fond of. And the goldfish had actually been killed by the earthquake while he was away—but Lois said that she felt like a lying wretch when she told him so, because it seemed so improbable that one should have been killed and the rest still be all right—and she knew that he believed that it had died through her neglect.—And then afterwards he slammed a glass door, you know, one night when he was drunk, and it broke and cut her arm. And after that, he was just in the depths and they've both been sunk ever since. Lynn and I have just been broken-hearted over it—we can hardly bear to talk about it! And we can't think of anything to do about it. And they both write us letters separately. We've invited them to come on and visit us separately—that's the only thing we can think of to do." "And Ed's really such a nice fellow," I

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said. "When we remember how cute he used to be—how he used to come cavorting into the house and say, 'Hey! Hey! And How!' But Lois says he gets awfully on her nerves and I can perfectly see how he would." With deep affection and looking absently out into the dim wet dusk, I reflected on their extraordinary humanity and generosity; they were scarcely jealous even of each other!—Ralph summoned us with pride to the dining-room for the supper he had prepared himself and alone. We had tomato soup, canned succotash, and the lobsters with melted butter, and enjoyed them very much. Then we had another drink.

On the train, I read with cocktail-dazed eyes that the Massachusetts Supreme Court had refused, on technical grounds, to grant the appeal for Sacco and Vanzetti. The next day, when I had returned to camp, I received a telegram which said, "Come back at once. The men from Rumpelmayer's are draining the old oaken bucket," and was signed, "Forsaken"—and another telegram from a friend connected with the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee, telling me that "picketers and speakers were needed for last protest." But I had used up all my money and so couldn't do either.

EDMUND WILSON.

# Wild Men

*Revelry, by Maurine Watkins, based on the novel by Samuel Hopkins Adams. The Theater Masque, September 12, 1927.*

*The Wild Man of Borneo, by Marc Connelly and Herman J. Mankiewicz. Bijou Theater, September 13. 1927.*

IF Presidents of the United States and their managers and intimates enjoy from the press an extraordinary protection during their terms in the White House and even during their lives, they are open enough to their exposures afterward; and of this situation among us, Samuel Hopkins Adams' "Revelry" was a lurid illustration. You might expect the play based on such a book to be a startling affair, and so Miss Watkins' "Revelry" may be to simple souls. What it reveals about some people and some of the goings on in Washington might seem to be daring to the limit of theatrical audacity.

As a matter of fact, I was agreeably surprised to see that this play has not for its object exposure and attack—if it had such an object it is not very successful—but the portrayal of a man in a high place as he makes his progress toward confusion and ruin, and goes to wreck in a turmoil of rottenness, vulgar puerility and crime.

It was interesting to hear that the author of "Chicago," with her sharp sardonic pen and crisp journalistic eye, was going to do a dramatization of this novel. I expected much. The play that Miss Watkins fashioned is, if somewhat disappointing, not worthless. Its tone carries a certain sarcastic gravity; Miss Watkins has restrained, in the case of these national themes, her gay brutality, and has enjoyed herself less with naughty exposures. This is an advantage, in that it leaves the play more impressive, but a loss, in that it cuts down the gusto and lively contagion that made "Chicago," in its way, such a little masterpiece.

The part of the woman into whose house the President stumbles when he is running away from his friends at midnight is written too stiffly; it seems unreal in the midst of the realistic details of the play. And this unreality is furthered by Miss Eleanor Woodruff. She succeeds in persuading us that Mrs. Westervelt is a woman of the world and that her tragic life has given her suppressions and tensions, but she needs more flexibility all through her performance, a more natural flow of the visual and emotional line.

Miss Watkins has contrived an effective rhythm of the poker scenes; coming at intervals as the play goes on, they symbolize the President's life and ways and his relation to his gang and their treatment of him. But the political themes of "Revelry" are obscured, lost often in words and in stage fuddling. The points are often blurred in the writing, the speeches in their delivery. But, to a large extent, this defect is due to Mr. Robert Milton's directing. His treatment has given dignity and meaning to much of the play, but he is suffering, evidently, from some futile idea of realism by which he has people sitting with their backs to the audience chattering on very much as they might do in life, as if that likeness were the whole end to be sought. This method, plus the very bad, though natural enough, diction of the actors playing the President's villainous friends, makes much of the text impossible to hear. Such realistic resemblance is worth nothing at all in itself; it is worthwhile only when the fact itself of the resemblance can be given dramatic point. Mr. Milton has been at this trick for three or four years now, and ought to know better. To delight in it for its own sake is artistically on a par with applauding real water in the pump for "Lena Rivers," which we are supposed to have got over by now.

Finally, it is encouraging to see a play with more than the usual number of motivations making up its texture. "Revelry" conveys very little about love, but rather tries at such themes as loyalty, naïvely seen and followed with a sort of thieves' honor, oil scandals, cabinet acts and resignations, attacks in the Senate, and so on. It succeeds but feebly with most of these. But in one respect it achieves a real impression: the accumulation of the President's developing sense of his office, his entanglement in shady affairs, his strain and naïve bewilderment, and his final dilemma and suicide, amounts in the end to a genuine pathos, with a hint of epic quality about it. To this effect Mr. Milton's directing and Mr. Churchill's portrayal of the President have added a great deal.

As for "The Wild Man of Borneo," about which there were expectations, I, for my part, enjoyed it. But it is plain that the piece does not ever quite arrive at its needed persuasion; it never quite comes off.

This play reverts agreeably to the days of the Christy Girl and Admiral Dewey and all that equipage of trailing skirts, mutton-leg sleeves and tight trousers. We begin in a boarding-house, kept adorably by Miss Josephine Hull, with that quality of hers that runs between pathos and giggles. She is the retired actress, Bernice Marshall. A new lodger is expected, Mr. J. Daniel Thompson, a personage, or so it seems. He arrives with his daughter, makes

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soap secretly in his chambers, which he sells at a dime museum; keeps up his spirit for his daughter's sake, who thinks he is a great man. His past has been on the road with medicine shows. He pretends now that he is alternating with Richard Mansfield in Cyrano, but is in reality only too grateful to play the Wild Man of Borneo when a friend from the old days comes along and offers him the role. His daughter, her lover and the people from the boarding-house find him at the museum. The story ends with his daughter's marriage to the inventor, and their persuading Mr. Thompson to go on with the wild man.

The story of "The Wild Man of Borneo" seems slight, but it is less slight than appears; a firmer direction—the staging is Mr. Connelly's—could have enforced its main outlines and easily given it a more forward movement. The outlay of character types is entertaining enough, the lines are often delightful and often tinged with charming bits of knowledge out of our American life. The acting is fair. What does most to thwart Mr. Connelly's and Mr. Mankiewicz's play of its right stage effect is the acting of Mr. George Hassell in the leading role.

Mr. Hassell's performance might have suited a one-act piece about this J. Daniel Thompson; a method like his might serve to state a certain broad caricature completely in a short time like that. But spread through a whole evening, such playing is too forced, heavy and hard-working, not to speak of its monotony of intention and its too constant absorption of the stage space. With an orchestra, perhaps, and a fantastic exuberance in all the characters around this one, Mr. Hassell's playing might do. But in "The Wild Man of Borneo" it only swamped the play, mixed it up between burlesque sketching and comedy, and left it neither flesh, fish nor fowl. It was a performance full of effects and professional certainty; the scene of the reading from "Cyrano," with the double meaning, one to Thompson's daughter, one to himself, was beautifully, triumphantly done. But, on the whole, Mr. Hassell's was a bad performance, as only the most skilled theatrical expert can be bad.

STARK YOUNG.

# CORRESPONDENCE

## More After-Thoughts

SIR: I am adding one more letter to the many that you have received on the Sacco-Vanzetti case, particularly to note one important omission you naturally make in the editorial in your last issue, "Penalties of the Sacco-Vanzetti Execution."

The penalty to which I refer is a penalty, not of the execution, but of the hysterical opposition to it on the part of some liberals, and notably your magazine. This has led you to such extreme charges of bias, class prejudice and moral blindness as not only to lend appreciable aid to the most dangerous forces in society, but also to undermine your influence with those liberal-minded people who, with you, "believe that the hope of mankind depends upon the creative power of human intelligence." Very many of these must hereafter, to a much greater extent than in the past, discount your conclusions and opinions on other matters as of questionable value, "admitting and cherishing doubt when evidence is lacking"—even as you preach but do not practise.

To a large extent, of course, such discounting is as desirable as it is inevitable. But when you insist, as it has seemed to me you have, in effect, insisted, that you, and not a Massachusetts jury, shall try men accused of crime in Massachusetts; that you, and not Massachusetts courts, shall pass on the sufficiency of the evidence and the fairness of the trial; that you, and not the Governor of Massachusetts, shall determine the purpose of the appointment of an advisory commission; that you, and not this commission, shall effectively advise the Governor, and that the power of pardon shall be exercised or withheld as you, and not the Governor, shall deem proper—and when you attribute every evil and ignoble motive to all who fail to agree with your own point of view in the consideration of very many and complicated questions, which in large part are technical matters of law and legal procedure, outside the field of your own special knowledge or experience—you do yourself a greater harm than you can realize while you are under the influence of your present delusion.

For a long time to come you must suffer the penalty of lessened influence—we must suffer the penalty of lessened light.

WILLIAM C. RICE.

Boston, Massachusetts.

SIR: After subscribing to your paper for a number of years, and recently giving the matter much thought, I have decided to let my subscription lapse. The reason? Sacco and Vanzetti. My present views follow early agreement with you and Frankfurter. But that was before I knew the other side, which you carefully concealed. I think you did an enormous disservice to the world when you made thousands believe that the charge of radicalism was brought to prejudice the case by the prosecution, aided by Judge Thayer, and never, as far as I know, corrected your error or deliberate misstatment by informing your readers that the defense itself brought out the radical character of its clients, and did this despite the warning of the judge.

You are on dangerous ground, Mr. Editor, when you charge such men as Thayer and Lowell with bias, because they bear long-established and honorable names, because they have no need to sell their souls for the means of existence, because all their lives they have used in public service high intellectual gifts and training. Question yourself. The impatient liberal becomes the radical, the radical the fanatic, the fanatic the destroyer. Which are you?

HERBERT S. WELSH.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

SIR: I have and do admire the excellency of the New Republic —I do not agree with its views on prohibition, and I am sorry that it was not clear on the Sacco-Vanzetti affair. Sometimes, in spite of the erudition of your well chosen staff, you are blinded to the main idea, and you should not, in my humble opinion, exert yourselves to misplaced sympathy with murderers. Government is one thing—murder is another. In this regard, I am glad that your circulation is limited to the so-called intelligentsia.

I do agree with your criticism of the American Democracy, and believe in its wholesome effect. Honest comment on the undesirables from Italy might well find a place in your columns. You could tell the truth about them without indignation. I cannot.

ROBERT G. EARLEY.

Geneva, Illinois.

SIR: On looking over such data as are available to me on the Sacco-Vanzetti case, I am again impressed with the difference between your paper and other liberal or semi-radical publications. It seems to me that you, while taking positions very strongly and unequivocally, yet keep an admirable balance of judgment and a moderation of tone. As to Sacco and Vanzetti, I think there is serious doubt as to their guilt, but when one reads carefully the Lowell-Stratton report, I think one must admit that

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there is serious doubt of their innocence also, and when men like the presidents of Harvard and Massachusetts Tech. come unanimously to the same opinion as Governor Fuller, after elaborate study of the evidence, the case is one, it seems to me, where men of thoughtfulness and sobriety ought to express themselves quietly and temperately, especially in view of the inflammable character of the whole situation. I feel that one renders the best service in that way. People of culture and of strength of character do not scream their opinions. The New Republic always speaks out strongly and clearly, but also temperately.

Cleveland, Ohio. O. E. C.

SIR: Lockwood Myrick, Jr.'s letter, in your issue of September 14, interested us, as the mental state of those men in California, of whom he writes, is an exact replica of that of the residents in this part of New Hampshire.

For the last six years we have been doing our utmost to present the case of Sacco and Vanzetti in its true light to our neighbors on the farms and in the towns about us, trying to gain their sympathy and coöperation in the fight for a new trial; pointing out the danger to all citizens of these United States, if men can be found guilty of murder without due evidence, through the court's and jury's prejudice against their private opinions. We have been met on all sides with exactly the state of mind of which Mr. Myrick justly complains. A neighboring farmer, whose family has lived in this town for five generations, who, in other ways, seems a typical American of the better type, said to me: "Sacco and Vanzetti don't deserve to have civil rights. They are self-confessed draft dodgers and anarchists. I say Judge Thayer did right to find 'um guilty of that murder, evidence or not, so as to git rid of 'um."

On my saying that that seemed to me the worst sort of anarchy and thoroughly un-American, he replied, "America's fur Americans, NOT FOR DAMNED FOREIGNERS."

Here's to Mr. Myrick's suggestion of Americanizing the American—that hopeless job.

South Danbury, New Hampshire. E. HILLSMITH.

SIR: Massachusetts, since abolition days, has preened herself as being superior in virtue to the benighted Southern states, where Negroes are still denied their full rights as American citizens. Even today Massachusetts sends missionaries to the South, to uplift the Negro.

And I am not denying that the Negro needs help. He does. He is a victim of racial prejudice. Oklahoma, though not of the old South, is largely Southern in thought. It has a Jim Crow law, separate schools, and, in its early years of statehood, enacted a grandfather's-clause law.

In every election campaign, Democratic orators shout loudly of the danger of Negro domination. All sensible people know this danger, in this state, is absurdly small. And yet, I suppose Negro domination is fully as threatening in Oklahoma as is anarchist control of Massachusetts.

It might be thought, therefore, that Oklahoma courts would show themselves just as craven in their administration of justice to the blacks as Massachusetts courts have shown themselves in regard to the reds. Wherefore an incident that occurred in Oklahoma, in the same week in which Massachusetts put Sacco and Vanzetti to death, is illuminating.

A Negro, Roswell Hamilton, killed two peace officers in Wetumka, as they were taking him to jail. That he killed them both there is no disputing. Neither officer had fired a shot. Hamilton's excuse was that the officers were beating him, trying to make him confess where he bought the liquor he had when arrested. The jury sentenced him to death.

The Oklahoma Criminal Court of Appeals, in an opinion written by Judge T. A. Edwards, has just granted the Negro a new trial. "In the trial of a Negro for the murder of a white man," Judge Edwards holds, "before a white jury, it is prejudicial error for the prosecuting officer in his argument to appeal to race prejudice."

The prosecuting attorney, in his final argument to the jury, offered this gem, among others, referring to the attorney defending the Negro:

"They have the bold courage to stand up before an intelligent jury and say that you ought to believe this Negro in preference to the boy on his death-bed. I say, gentlemen of the jury, before I would say that I want God a' Mighty to strike me from this earth—in the presence of his mother, tell her that that dying boy lied about it. Would you do it? I wouldn't do it for anything in this world, for all the money that you could get from the Negroes of this county. . . . Now I say you ought to be convinced beyond a reasonable doubt—that would convince a white man beyond a reasonable doubt."

There was much more to the same effect.

For Negro, or "nigger," in the above, substitute "red" or "anarchist," and compare it with the address to the jury in the Sacco-Vanzetti case.

Only, in Massachusetts, a conviction secured by an appeal to prejudice is permitted to stand, and in Oklahoma it isn't. Whence it might appear that the Old Bay State flatters herself in considering herself the sole custodian of the national conscience in the protection of the weak and helpless.

R. M. MCCLINTOCK.

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

## Technical Editor Wanted

SIR: Some of your readers may be interested to know of a Civil Service examination about to be held for the position of Technical Editor, in the Forest Service branch of the Department of Agriculture. The starting salary is $3,800 a year. Any American citizen under forty-five years of age who meets the requirements is eligible for the examination.

The duties of the position will include the critical review of scientific and technical manuscripts pertaining to forest research and wood utilization and embodying principles of physics, chemistry, biology and economics, with a view to securing accurate and adequate presentation. The appointee will be required to assist authors in the selection and arrangement of their material; to determine the suitability of material for publication in various periodicals; to revise manuscripts for logical arrangement and grammatical correctness; and to supervise the preparation of copy for the printer.

Applicants must show that they have been graduated with major work in pure or applied science from a college or university of recognized standing, and that they have had at least five years' experience in the preparation or review of technical or scientific papers. Two years of postgraduate study toward a doctor's degree may be substituted for one year of the required experience. Special credit will be given for the degree of Ph. D. in physics or mathematics. The applicant must submit, with his application, published or unpublished material of which he is the author or editor.

Applications must be on file with the Civil Service Commission at Washington, D. C., not later than October 4, 1927. Applicants should at once apply for Form 2600, stating the title of the examination desired, to the U. S. Civil Service Commission, Washington, D. C.; the Secretary of the U. S. Civil Service Board, Customhouse, Boston, Mass., New York City, New Orleans, La.; Post Office, Philadelphia, Pa.; Atlanta, Ga.; Cincinnati, O.; Chicago, Ill.; St. Paul, Minn.; Seattle, Wash.; San Francisco, Calif.; Denver, Colo.; or Old Customhouse, St. Louis, Mo.

T. J. MOSLEY,
U. S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service.

Madison, Wisconsin.

## What Do You Mean, No Witches?

SIR: My old friend Tufts is all wet, when he says witches were hanged in Salem. He quite misses the myth. There never was a witch. Alas! indeed, for the young.

HARRISON H. BROWN.

Laplata, New Mexico.

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# A Forbidden Book

*The President's Daughter, by Nan Britton. New York: The Elizabeth Ann Guild. 439 pages. $5.*

THE figures of departed statesmen usually remain, at least for their own generation, in attitudes of which dignity and distinction are suggested by the arrangement of the cloths in which they are shrouded. Now and then a corner of the covering is raised by a curious investigator, but usually we have to wait a half century or more for the full revelation of them in their private and public character. Whether Warren Harding is fortunate or not in the unveiling which has overtaken him thus early in his posthumous career is for the future to say. A year ago, the scandals which surrounded his administration were exposed to daylight by Mr. Samuel Hopkins Adams in his novel, "Revelry," lately made into a play. Now appears a still more intimate disclosure. In the present volume Miss Britton tells the story of a "life-long love for Warren Gamaliel Harding and his love for me and our love for our child . . . together with the family, community, and political circumstances under which this relationship continued for the six and one-half years preceding the sudden passing of the President on August 2, 1923." The truthfulness with which these circumstances are recorded leaps out from every page. One may question whether so complete a revelation could be made with the singleness of purpose declared in the announcement. At first sight it seems incredible that certain details of the story were not set down in malice. One suspects at times the hand of a ghost, adept in the style of the tabloid. Yet it is possible to see in Miss Britton's lack of tact an evidence of good faith, and in the sheer vulgarity of her record a note at once of truth and of pathos. At all events, the book tells a story perfectly symptomatic of American life of the present day; tells it with a frankness and simplicity which shames the efforts of Mr. Sumner's league to suppress it, and of literary magazines and departments to boycott it.

Nan Britton fell in love with Mr. Harding, as she usually calls him, when she was a school girl in Marion, Ohio, and he was running for governor of the state. It was a thoroughly small-town situation, quite an American idyll, rich in the sentiment which gathers around Mothers' Day and Old Home Week. There came a red-letter day for Nan when she went to congratulate Mr. Harding on his election, and he left for a moment the "bunch" with whom he was playing poker to come to speak to her on the famous porch. Nan's mother tried to side-track her daughter's enthusiasm by commenting on her hero's habit of chewing tobacco; and it was reported that at the Twigs, "the most fashionable older ladies' club in Marion," the girl's infatuation was almost the only topic of conversation —but all was vain to stem the tide.

With the freshness of unconsciousness, the author continues to draw scenes illustrative of American manners of the day. When she was starting life on her own account, she applied to Mr. Harding for help, and he took her to see Judge Gary of the Steel Corporation. "After introducing me to Judge Gary, Mr. Harding inquired casually of him whether his senatorial services in a certain matter had been satisfactory. The Judge replied that they had indeed and thanked Mr. Harding. We were then taken into the office of the Comptroller, Mr. Filbert, and Judge Gary made this statement to Mr. Filbert: 'Mr. Filbert, I want to help Senator Harding to help this young lady.'" As easy as that! After this arrived the period of what the author terms "climactic intimacies," which included new adventures. In New York, on one occasion, the house detectives of a hotel started to be rough, but the sight of the name "W. G. Harding" in a hat tamed them to respectful demeanor, and the author learned a lesson in political science, "namely, that a member of the House of Representatives or of the United States Senate cannot be detained for any reason whatsoever when he is en route to Washington to serve the people." Then began the great adventure, the coming of the child. The discovery illustrates the mingling of idealism and practicality which is so characteristic of us as a people. "Warren Harding craved to be the father fully as much as I craved to be the mother of his child. 'You know, Nan, I have never been a father,' he said. However, he was deeply concerned for both of us, and in an attempt at a simple solution, he went out and returned with some . . . tablets." These, however, proved ineffective, and, in due course of time, Elizabeth Ann, who gives title to the book, was born.

The rest of the story is concerned with the love of a man occupying the highest position in the State and a girl working to make the best of herself for her child. They met now in the President's office of the White House, the meetings arranged appropriately by a secret service man. Miss Britton knew little of the political situation, but she gathered that Harding's friends were taking advantage of him; and she sensed the tragedy of his helplessness. "I'm in jail, Nan, and can't get out." One thing which worried him, he told her, more than the combined worries of the administration, was the situation of the woman he loved and the child he never saw. "By all the laws of God and man certainly Warren G. Harding was entitled to nurture this spring of hidden father-love! Other little girls he could fondle openly, but his own dear child he dared not acknowledge, nor bestow upon her the love he felt, before a narrow-minded and censorious public." Elizabeth Ann was adopted by Miss Britton's married sister. Mr. Harding, during his lifetime, provided adequately for her. Miss Britton, meanwhile, conducted herself as an ambitious American girl. She worked as stenographer at Northwestern and Columbia Universities, took courses in play writing, and went abroad to study French. While she was at Dijon she heard of Mr. Harding's death, and returned to America to find that he had made no provision for herself or his child. Tim Slade, the friendly secret service man, tried to interest some of Harding's friends in her case; but the secret which, while her President-lover was alive, would have drawn millions from good men eager to come to the aid of the party, was now not worth a cent. Proposals to the Harding family met with inadequate response; and Miss Britton was driven to put her case before the public, partly to get money to educate her daughter, partly to set forth "the need for legal and social recognition and protection for all children in these United States born out of wedlock."

The first motive does not necessarily discredit the second. Indeed, that they should be put forward together is a mark of naïve good faith on the part of the writer. It is doubtless quite true that, if Harding's sisters and wife had cared enough for his name to protect it, this book would not have been written; yet it is difficult to believe that it was written for revenge on them or him. And indeed, when all is said and done, aside from his failure to provide for his daughter (and Miss Britton believes that his intention in this regard was defeated by his family), Harding does not come off too badly in this severest of tests to which a man can be subjected, his intimate portrait

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by a woman whose love for him is her sole qualification for the task. The final effect of the book is to deepen one's sense of his tragedy—the tragedy of the unfit. It may have been true, in the words of Brigadier General Sawyer, subscribed to by accredited spokesmen of the Republican party, that "President Harding represents the finest there is today in America—morally and physically and mentally." Alas! the finest was not good enough. The novel "Revelry," based on the political scandals under Harding, turned on the fact that he was a small-town hero who brought small-town material and methods into the administration of the country. The present volume emphasizes the same truth from a different angle. When Main Street elects the President, this is the caliber of President we shall get. The fault is by no means entirely personal. The hypocrisy of the public is responsible for the maintenance and prevalence of small-town standards of morality; and it is to the public that the mother of the President's daughter appeals—we fear, in vain.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

# Who Are the Sentimentalists?

*Capital Punishment in the Twentieth Century, by E. Roy Calvert. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.*

THE present attempt to reintroduce the death penalty in states where it has been abolished makes the publication of this book most opportune. Mr. Calvert states frankly that his purpose is to present the case against capital punishment, and his book is a fair and conservative statement of that argument.

With statistics taken from many sources, he marshals a host of evidence showing, what ought to be obvious, that capital punishment does not prevent crime. This is followed by a similar treatment of the effect of abolition upon the homicidal rate. He concludes, "In no single instance is there evidence of a permanent increase in homicidal crime as a result of abolition; in many there has been a decided decrease." The evidence he adduces is sufficient to justify a more positive assertion; but this conclusion is characteristic of his cautious treatment. He quotes some interesting statistics for the United States registration area for the period 1912 to 1919. Six of the twenty-six states included have abolished the death penalty. Five of these six are among the eight states with the smallest percentage of homicides. The other stands sixteenth on the list of twenty-six. Here is one bit of evidence which might be given more publicity in the states where attempts are being made to restore the death penalty.

Mr. Calvert follows this statistical demonstration with a consideration of the effect of executions upon prisons, upon the press, and upon the public. The ethics of capital punishment is given a sane treatment from the psychological standpoint. The one argument for the death penalty—to rid society of a misfit—is dismissed by showing that its most insistent advocates are unwilling to apply the same principle to unfortunates other than criminals. Although this book is written primarily for the British reader, its detailed analysis of the problem and clear presentation of argument will commend it to American readers. It is carefully documented and contains an up-to-date bibliography.

As one goes over this evidence, his wonder grows that the death penalty has been restored in four states since the War, and that serious attempts are being made to restore it in the remaining abolition states. This in spite of the lack of a crumb of evidence that it is a deterrent. Why?

Officials in a panic over the crime wave feel that something must be done to restore confidence. The futile death penalty is too frequently welcomed as something to satisfy the press and public without a disturbing reformation of their own system. Every brutal murder is made the occasion for renewed demands for its restoration. People angered out of their sense of proportion by some criminal deed, and motivated by a very human lust for revenge, sign petitions and pass resolutions demanding the death penalty for murderers. A large section of the press takes up the demand, and, in one state at least, circulates the statement that gangs of robbers are leaving the states with the death penalty and operating only in the abolition states. There is no evidence of this, but, with the press as the authority, it is believed by a large public. No attempt whatever is made to prove that capital punishment is a deterrent; that is reiterated as an accepted truth, and all opponents are classified as sob-sisters and sentimentalists more interested in helping the criminal than in saving the lives of worthy citizens. Strangely enough, certain men prominent in church organizations come to the support of the death penalty as the Bible-sanctioned punishment for murder. (Mr. Calvert finds that the only support of the death penalty in Holland comes from a similar source.) "Everyone's life is endangered because we do not have the death penalty." "Anyway, a murderer," letters in the press declare, "deserves to hang." All of which raises the question: Who, after all, are the sentimentalists?

ELMER ELLIS.

# Emerson and Other Moderns

*Emerson, and Others, by Van Wyck Brooks. New York: E. P. Dutton. 250 pages. $3.*

SOME years ago, in "America's Coming of Age," Mr. Brooks wrote a suggestive chapter on the need in America of a background of discussion against which ideas could be clarified and a few important definitions set in at least tentative relief. Because he was, happily, not alone in this conviction, much discussion has followed, Mr. Brooks regularly doing his share in the effort to persuade contemporary America to think. In the general assault on Puritanism, he has differed from many of the others in not hating it quite so unqualifiedly, because he understands it more clearly; so that he has been aspiring not so much to destroy it root and branch as to proceed from it to something better, "the new faith without which America cannot live." In his latest volume, "Emerson, and Others," he is writing from the same basic convictions as heretofore: the importance of "a fine, free, articulate cultural order," the sterility of the American cultural soil, and the saving possibilities of an intellectual aristocracy to be found in the maturing generation.

There were grounds for expecting that the bruited study of Emerson would be on the scale and after the manner of the Mark Twain and Henry James books. It is very different. Using the freedom to work in the mood of the moment that Emerson would have approved, Mr. Brooks chose to draw six pictures more in the fashion of Bazalgette on Thoreau than of Brooks on Clemens. The materials were drawn from the Journals and other sources, in the effort to allow Emerson to present himself largely in his own words. And as these pictures do not fill a book, he reprinted several other essays in their original forms, although, as he says, "the two on Randolph Bourne and 'The Literary Life in America' contain many statements that are certainly less true now than they were when they were written."

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I doubt whether this prefatory admission should be a disarming one. The essays are obviously reprinted because they represent Mr. Brooks' convictions. If he did not care to revise and edit them, it is hardly fair to expect this discriminating service from his readers. Emerson is here—a little nervous and staccato in presentation, like the quick-striding figures in a moving picture—because in his own day he was talking to the same ends of upbuilding a new American faith and breeding a more intelligent aristocracy of mind. Bourne is here because in a splendid way he was a brief fulfillment of his own desires for his country. But the essay on "The Literary Life of America" is here because —as such a psychoanalyst should have appreciated—it is a recording of Mr. Brooks' habitual and unguided current of thought—revery, I think, is the technical word.

And it is the chief feature of revery that one "thinks" it because of a predisposition rather than because of a conscious procedure, and that it is done rather by following a path than by breaking a trail. Mr. Brooks' path leads down hill, as that is the easiest way, and not at all in the direction of the new faith which he is seeking when he is really alert and alive. When he is positively engaged in thinking, he contends that the creative mind must show the way toward the culture whereby the people shall be saved. When he is wandering in revery, he laments that popular indifference retards the creator, he quotes as authoritative the sweeping allegations of a young poet who generalizes about America from what he knows of Nahant and the Back Bay, he contrasts Lamb in London with Lanier in San Antonio and Baltimore, he says, in spite of a thousand facts to the contrary, that few European writers were esteemed as highly in America as Hawthorne and Emerson in their own time, and, most surprisingly, he says of the authors of "Flammonde" and "Captain Craig" and of the last third of "The Spoon River Anthology" that, in their hands, "the individual as a spiritual unit invariably suffers defeat." He sees, in short, as he meanders along, only what he wants to see, and innocently imagines what he does not and cannot see. The two essays that he alludes to contain many statements that are not less true than they used to be, because these statements never have been true.

This defect in Mr. Brooks' writing is worthy of mention because it has long persisted. His conclusions as a rule are sounder than his arguments. He drifts into the attempt to make the worse appear the better reason, when there are plenty of good reasons at hand. He is least convincing, therefore, when he is arguing, and most conclusive when he is talking from broad assumptions. In this latter vein his apostolic fervor often lifts him to periods of solid eloquence.

A source of confusion still persists, however, even for those who are predisposed to agree with Mr. Brooks, in the variety of meanings behind such terms as "America" and "the country." Perhaps he is like J. B. Yeats, of whom he writes that he never could endure to be pinned down to definitions. Occasionally, as in the essays on Sinclair or Bourne, he makes his meaning quite clear; but often, though he always has in mind the thinkers and the populace, the reader is hard put to it to select, or is forced to adopt a vague composite of the two. In the critic's own mind, there is probably no confusion, but his pages are not always free from it. Yet for one who has set himself so definite a task and who devotes himself so singly to it, there is need for unmistakable clarity in the use of fundamental terms. As Mr. Brooks says of himself and his fellow critics, they can come into consciousness of themselves "only by prodigies of alert self-adaptation, of discriminative self-scrutiny, of conscious effort."

PERCY H. BOYNTON.

# The Bismarck Myth

*From Bismarck to the World War, by Erich Brandenburg. Translated by Annie Elizabeth Adams. New York: Oxford University Press. 543 pages. $7.*

*Bismarck, Andrássy and Their Successors, by Count Julius Andrássy. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 463 pages. $6.*

OF the great statesmen of the nineteenth century, the younger Pitt, Canning, Talleyrand, Metternich, Cavour, Bismarck, the latter is by far the greatest. So runs the historical rede. He remains the unchallenged hero of that age, as may be seen by these two latest earnest studies of the period that led up to the nationalistic cataclysm. Count Andrássy, an enlightened and broad-minded Hungarian diplomat, and Professor Erich Brandenburg, a more narrow-gauge and more "scientific" historian, differ in details. Both of them are well documented, though, unfortunately, Count Andrássy does not always indicate his sources. Both have quite evidently made careful use of the records of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which have recently been published. Professor Brandenburg is the type of historian which the nineteenth century developed. He has a scrupulous regard for facts. Occasionally he loses himself in them. At such times, it is only his presuppositions that appear clearly. A nationalist, he is trying to justify his nation. Count Andrássy is the son of a great Hungarian, once Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria-Hungary. Hungarians in general have ordinarily not believed in the rights of nationality, so far as other nations are concerned. They, however, stood somewhat apart from the welter of European politics. Count Andrássy has not written a volume of personal memoirs; it is a particularly interesting and well informed assessment of the men and the policies that made the Europe of 1914. He had known personally many of the diplomats whose work he discusses. As a lad, he had even seen Bismarck plain. His survey covers more particularly the period from 1870 to 1905, though it looks forward to the coming war and contains what is probably the ablest analysis of William II's personality and political influence that we have. Though he recognizes his "idealism," he finds in his passionate temper, his lack of sane judgment, his occasional boorishness and confidence in his God-given army, serious complicating factors that finally got on the nerves of a world already jumpy.

He tells us:

> It is regrettable that the German government, with its rude and cynical demeanor, was always more averse than that of any other nation to all movements for the preservation of peace. Following in the footsteps of Bismarck, they declared with brutal frankness that "the interests of the Fatherland were their sole concern." . . . The Germans incurred intense odium, which engendered a bitter anti-German public opinion, without their sincerity profiting them in the least. The impression was produced that German power made improvement impossible and only prolonged the reign of brute force.

On the whole, however, Count Andrássy looks down on the world of European diplomacy with an unusual degree of broad-minded detachment. With its personal touch, his book is highly readable and significant. Brandenburg lacks this amplitude and this personal touch. He conscientiously and industriously threshes the old chaff of policies, alliances, treaties and correspondence. He confines himself more narrowly to German policy. The main causes of

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the War he finds in Sir Edward Grey's possible timorousness or duplicity and in the villainy of Poincaré and Izvolsky. He adds some new material and shows, for instance, that William II's famous Kruger telegram, for which he has so often been blamed, was not a case of imperial interference, but was sent, perhaps at the suggestion, certainly with the approval, of his advisors. The Hungarian diplomat here agrees with the German professional historian. Aside from such information as was garnered from the Count's personal experience, the new material offered is drawn, as in this case, from the German archives.

When, in his earnestness, Professor Brandenburg tries to explain the policy of the French before the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, on the assumption that "the outside world, especially the English world, must not guess how earnestly they desired war," he is simply being carried away again, as so many before him, by the old nationalistic complex of presuppositions. Here, Count Andrássy is a safer guide. As he sees it, this was not a deliberately willed war, like Bismarck's wars of '64, '66 and '70. The discouraging thing about both these volumes dominated by the personality of Bismarck, and preoccupied with the causes of the Great War, is that neither Count Andrássy nor Professor Brandenburg seems ever to have suspected that the system of which Bismarck is really the champion should have had any connection with the War which was the inevitable result of that system. Coalitions, armaments, secret treaties, threats, the mailed fist in the velvet glove, without any impartial court of appeal, constituted the sole *modus vivendi* of nationalistic politicians, struggling to defend or create their "vital interests." This is what broke down, temporarily at least, in 1914 to 1918. Nobody really wanted it, only it so happened that no one could prevent it. As wars go, this one is still the big waif of the nations. It is the Casper Hauser of the historians.

Bismarck is credited with being the great modern patriot, a German Washington. He is recognized, even by American historians, as the only true begetter of German unity. Instead, it would be as safe to say, indeed safer, that he did not create the German nation but a German Empire under Prussian leadership. In order to do this, he deliberately shouldered Austria, more German than Prussia, out of this Empire, though it took a war to do so. He is also generally credited with having been astute enough to foresee the forces which were to govern international life. He knew that nationalism had to be reckoned with. He knew this so well that for a time he opposed the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. As he saw it, it was French and could not be assimilated. But he saw even more clearly that diplomacy owed everything to the army, which alone made it effective. He therefore deferred to Von Moltke when the General insisted that the possession of Strassburg and Metz would save a hundred thousand men. German historians, like Brandenburg, have ever since made much of the French policy of *revanche*. If it existed, Bismarck created it. His somewhat exclusive interpretation of German "unification" which excluded Austria had much to do with shaping and determining the later policy of the Dual Monarchy, which was left as a purely dynastic, anachronistic state. This non-viable state in an age of nationalism he chose as Germany's chief ally. Its traditional Great Power policy in 1914 and the beginnings of its collapse in 1917 spelled his country's ruin. A case could be made out against Bismarck on the basis of *Realpolitik* alone.

It was not, as Professor Brandenburg sees it, a departure from Bismarckian tradition that ruined Germany and Europe. It was the persistence of that tradition itself. Bismarck, for a nationalist, suffered unduly from the "nightmare of coalitions," and first saw safety in the Alliance of the Three Emperors. He was the architect of the Triple Alliance and the cause of the Entente. This combination of Germany, Austria and Russia could be effective, since it did not have to consult parliaments and peoples, and Bismarck's attitude toward the people was precisely that of Commodore Vanderbilt. When, after the failure of this Alliance of the Three Emperors, Bismarck had signed the Triple Alliance, he returned to the Tsar in 1887 and secretly signed the famous "Reinsurance Treaty" with Russia, two articles of which were a direct violation of his obligations under the Triple Alliance. Brandenburg fails to make this clear. When Caprivi and William II refused to renew this Russian treaty in 1891, he blames them for thus departing from Bismarckian policy. Even Count Andrássy is inclined to take somewhat lightly Bismarck's duplicity.

Bismarck, the Iron Chancellor, was the champion of Great Power morality, when it was lower than the morality of "big business" at its worst. Not much has yet been done to change it. Most historians, even American historians, still accept his success as schoolboys of the nineties accepted the success of Jay Gould. They are scientific. They are fatalistic and worship the facts, where what we need is not more facts but some inkling of an international morality, and some tribunal to establish it, for Great Powers and for small.

Hegel, one of the Germans of the pre-scientific period, once said that every age must rewrite its history. If, since the World War, we are really in a new age, we must rewrite many of our histories, including Professor Brandenburg's. In politics, at least, if not in finance, we are still apparently deep in the Bismarckian era. To the enthusiasts who are now "debunking" history, I propose a life of the Iron Chancellor.

CHRISTIAN GAUSS.

# Dusty Answer

*Dusty Answer, by Rosamond Lehmann. New York: Henry Holt and Company. $2.50.*

I HAVE no idea how much the word *novelistic* is used or how unpleasantly, or to mean just what. But for me it expresses the quality that makes most fiction impossible to read and that scares me into running away from novels. I mean a kind of made-up something that has no reality either of its own, within itself, or with reference to anything outside itself. I mean the familiar blather about emotion, or some spasm of subtle or professional psychology, a licking, tasting, turning-over-on-your tongue analysis or a running barrage of complex omnisciences, which I, at least, find insufferable.

The absence of this novelistic element in Miss Lehmann's "Dusty Answer" is what relieves me and makes me so grateful at the very start, so willing to follow the fresh young pain and the sad, convincing precision with which this book unfolds.

This novel about a child growing up to be a young woman has countless lines of conversation and a good many of recounting, plus a few hundred about the natural world. The conversation is remarkably good; the recounting for the most part admirable, though now and then pattered about rather than realized; the descriptions usually poorish, not from a poor eye—the vision is sensitive and keen—but from a stuffy, precious, intricate sense of writing. The trouble there, I believe, is bad models, an unfortunate

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reading of the abounding analyzers in the fiction of our time. And the peak of its tedium arrives in the passage where Roddy, at their love crisis, so to speak, carries Judith under "the unstirring willows." Judith may have felt the stillness or inertia or disinterest of the willow boughs at such a moment, but only bad schooling could let so intense a sincerity as Miss Lehmann's commit that word *unstirring*.

There are other things about Miss Lehmann's book that must remain a matter of taste and point of view: absence of humor, for example, or the absence of any interest outside the feelings of the characters, or the lack of any ideas beyond their brains and passions and chasms of experience, or the fact that the sum of what is achieved in "Dusty Answer" might have come from the heroine herself if she could write. But all this is the author's business and her peril; and the argument is easy. She may have meant to dwell only in Judith's mind, to see the whole of the book's matter from this one warm, persistent, honest thing that was Judith's growing into life. Perhaps the mere selection and arrangement of the book's content must supply the author's comment and philosophy. And for the sake of those who will think the book depressing, morbid or even degenerate, she may say that we do get, at the very end, the sense of steadfastness, solidity, some frail unity in Judith that sets her out above all the other people around her, and that is a kind of guarantee of passionate integrity.

The story of "Dusty Answer" is only an outline for the things seen and felt. A child in a beautiful house, with a famous poetic father and a worldly mother, no schools, only tutors and governesses; next door a family of cousins coming for vacations with their old grandmother, Julian, Charlie, Martin, Roddy, and Mariella—the account of whom, as well as being very charming, is almost a new method in the writing of child fiction—and, with the passage of years, each of these children growing up into what each is to be, into what life renders them, into their relations to each other. Then Cambridge, a college infatuation, a stay on the Continent, and finally, at the very last, the house sold next door and everyone gone, none of the people there having been for Judith but she having taken them one by one for herself, and finding herself now rid at last of her futile obsession of dependence on other people, and soon to begin to think: What next? But not quite yet.

"Dusty Answer" is an extraordinary first novel, for the unfailingly certain creation of the characters, for the insistence and courage of its record, and for the rich monotony of its emotional tone. As it moves from its beginning to its end, you feel in it that sort of progression and unity that your life has. And you get a sense that every emotion, experience, desire, however beautiful, blessed, dangerous or condemned, is, at its birth, innocent, as a human being is; and you are thus able to see more simply its nature and destiny.

The technical claims of "Dusty Answer" rest most on the drawing of the characters, the consummate accuracy of their inmost details and the distinctness with which they stand out from the rest of the world. The outer images of these characters are to some extent set down, some thinness or ruddy force or lovely suppleness, some color or gesture; but their most profound reality is within; each of them appears to us with the diffusion and exactness of an intimate knowledge; we have the sense that the nature of each of them is both unique and mysterious. This is high praise. S. Y.

*A Collection in the Making, by Duncan Phillips. New York: E. Weyhe. 112 pages. $5.*

MR. DUNCAN PHILLIPS has gathered together a remarkable collection of paintings; and in "A Collection in the Making" he surveys the problems that he has faced, explains his purpose, gives a brief critical biography of the painters that are represented, and illustrates the collection itself. Mr. Phillips has been equally hospitable to the moderns, and to those who have followed along established lines; and he has done, through exercising his private taste, what every great public collection should be doing—and lamentably fails to do. Instead of beginning with the old masters, and only tardily, grudgingly, coming to our own day, Mr. Phillips has proceeded, as it were, from the other end, and, having brought together Marin, Sheeler, Demuth, Weber, Davies, Miller, Ryder, Renoir, Cézanne, Daumier, he casts around in his mind for representative paintings in the grand tradition which would connect up with these names. This collection is a bold essay; Mr. Phillips has the courage to make his mistakes, and to trust that posterity and other tastes will rectify them, instead of clinging to mummified assurances of correctness, and so not merely avoiding all the questionable names in contemporary painting, but all the potentially great ones as well. This collection is already big enough and sufficiently well balanced to carry a few mediocre pictures without any great loss; a high standard, and a variety of excellences, are, on the contrary, its striking qualities. Here is a hint to other rich men—and a profound word of warning to timid curators! L. M.

*Bouquet, by G. B. Stern. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 262 pages. $3.50.*

IN the interests of law enforcement in our beloved country, protest is imperative against the publication of such (so-called) literature as "Bouquet"—G. B. Stern's irresponsible chronicle of a "wine tour" made by four *fast* friends—and a stimulus to wine-bibbing so potent as to be practically seditious. In the opinion of the reviewer, it should be forbidden the mails, since it is provocative, exciting, shamelessly light-hearted and private-spirited, as well as damnably tantalizing. If you have been through the country described, you wonder why you ever returned to your native desert, and if you haven't, it all but uproots you and takes you there by the next boat. Dangerous, one observes, alike from standpoints of Morality and Patriotism. D. B. W.

## Contributors

"POLITICAL ECONOMIST" is the pseudonym of an authority in this field who has had exceptional opportunity to observe the workings of the federal taxation system. He is the author of "Can Income Taxes Be Shifted?" in the New Republic of August 31, 1927.

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